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SEEK THE LIGHT!

BY CALEB DUNN.

Seek the noble, shun the ill,
Do all goodness that you can;
You have power if you will—
Power to prove yourself a man—
Seek the light!

What though born of low degree?
For that God will not condemn;
One was born in poverty—
Manger-born in Bethlehem—
Seek the light!

God has given you the might
To arise and show your power;
Fight the wrong, espouse the right,
And when Trouble's dark clouds lower,
Seek the light!

Be content not to remain
Bound by chains of ignorance
Such contentment e'er is vain;
Let your motto be "Advance!"—
Seek the light!

Only those win full success
Who enlist in Virtue's cause
Who denounce all wickedness,
And uphold true manhood's laws—
Seek the light!

Lead your neighbor, if you find
He is groping by the way;
Teach him wisdom, cheer his mind,
Guide him out into the day—
Seek the light!

Do the very best you can;
Live not for yourself alone,
If you'd prove yourself a man;
And you'll see, when life is done,
Heaven's light!

The Plot Against Hawley;

OR, THE

PRISONER OF DESOLATION.

By LEON LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE BOY MAGICIAN," "RED KNIFE," "THE BROKEN HOME," "EDDY'S SEARCH," "THE CLUB-FOOT BEAR," "MARK HEBER'S LUCK," ETC.

CHAPTER XV.

A TIMELY DELIVERANCE.

It is hardly necessary to say that the revelations of Captain Dougal produced in Hawley's soul a keen sense of peril.

He comprehended that he was booked for trouble.

"There are forty-two of these runaway convicts, you say, Captain Dougal?" he questioned.

"Yes, forty-two of them, including Fisty Bantam, their leader. They are as bad a lot of cut-throats as ever existed—such outlaws, in fact, that their hands must necessarily be against every man they may encounter. And when I remind you that they are all armed, you will see that they are in a position to extend their violence to you upon the least provocation."

"We'll beware of them," said Will. "Have you any arms within reach?"

"I ought to have. The villains have plundered the ship of almost everything, of course, but I'll see."

He proceeded to his state-room in a slow and feeble sort of way, which attested how sore and weak he was with his long captivity.

In a few moments he was back again.

"Fortunately," he reported, "the runaways have not noticed my little cupboard. Here is a pair of revolvers which are loaded with water-proof cartridges. I will divide with you."

"Many thanks," said Will., as he secured the weapon on his person. "I feel safer now. The only other weapon I have is an old case-knife, given me by 'his majesty,' the same with which I cut your bonds."

"And here also," added Dougal, "is a flask of brandy and a handful of biscuits. Won't you take a drink, Mr. Hawley?"

"No, thank you."

"Well, I will, for I am as weak as a kitten;" and Dougal suited his action to the word. "I will also gnaw a biscuit while we are talking, for I haven't eaten a morsel in twenty-four hours."

"That's right; do so, while I step on deck a moment, to make sure that the runaways are still quiet in their camp, and that we have nothing to fear from them until morning."

He was gone even as he finished speaking, but returned promptly.

"I see nothing, hear nothing," he reported. "We'll talk a few minues longer, while you are getting up strength to swim ashore. Did these runaways intend to come here when they left Australia?"

"They did, as strange as it seems!"

"What can they want here?"

"It's impossible to say with any certainty. They may intend to hide here for a longer or shorter time—it being summer now—but they can hardly intend to people the island, as Pitcairn was peopled by the mutineers of the *Bounty*. I have heard some of them speak of a large treasure which has been buried here by pirates, and of which they propose to come into possession."

"Ah! is it possible?"

"What! did you ever hear of any such treasure?"

"I have, Captain, I have—of a treasure amounting to a million, which was stolen from my wife's uncle, Thomas Aymar of Calcutta, some ten years ago!"

"By pirates, Mr. Hawley?"

"Yes, sir."

"And buried on this island?"

"Yes, sir. Such a treasure has existed, and such is its history. The facts relating to it are at this moment in my possession."

"Aymar?" repeated Capt. Dougal. "I have heard of Mr. Aymar often enough. Is it possible that he is your wife's uncle?"

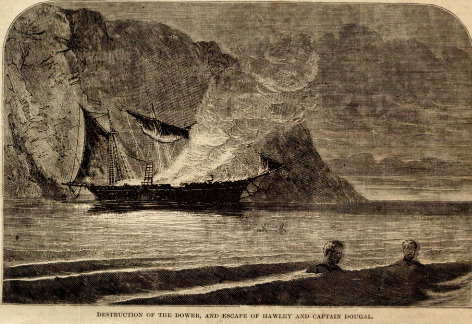
"The only relative she has in the world—if he is still living."

"Then there may be a basis for all I have heard these runaways say about coming here to look for a buried treasure?"

"There may indeed, although I am at a loss to know how the secret has fallen into such company. The first object of these runaways was, of course, to make their escape, but they may have several secondary objects—such as looking for a treasure here, colonizing some island, or even joining some of the piratical hordes which infest the East Indies. Will they be able to stop the leaks of the *Dower* and pump her out, so as to get her afloat again?"

"No, never. The good old ship has sailed her last sail. She was built in Greenock twenty years ago, and given by her builder to his daughter, as a wedding present, and hence her name. Her career has been a splendid one, but it is ended. I think she will be battered in pieces next winter by the ice, if she does not perish sooner."

ENTERED ACCORDING TO ACT OF CONGRESS, IN THE YEAR 1872, BY ROBERT BONNER, IN THE OFFICE OF THE LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS, AT WASHINGTON.



DESTRUCTION OF THE DOWER, AND ESCAPE OF HAWLEY AND CAPTAIN DOUGAL.

"And her two boats?"

"Her boats are not fit for a voyage of any duration, Mr. Hawley. They are even more shattered than the *Dower*."

"How did the runaways get possession of your ship?"

"They captured her at Perth, the capital of the Swan River colony, in Western Australia. This colony was started in 1829, but got along so poorly that in 1850 the colonists petitioned the government for the formation of a convict establishment in their midst—"

"A measure of singular taste, I must say," interrupted Hawley.

"I agree with you. But the measure seemed to many good men the only one that could prevent the whole vast region of Western Australia from being abandoned to the kangaroos. And this was evidently the view taken by the government, for the petition of the colonists was granted, and large numbers of convicts were dispatched to Swan River from the adjacent penal settlements—"

"And among them the runaways here present?"

"Exactly."

"Well, what were the results of the measure?"

"The results seemed satisfactory. Certain it is that the needed stimulus was given to all the affairs of the colony. But a plot has been preparing, it seems, for several months past, on the part of the most desperate convicts in and around Perth, to make a bold stroke for their freedom. Fisty Bantam was their leader. Their project was to seize a ship—any ship that might come in their way—and make their escape to some corner of the earth whither it would be difficult or impossible to pursue them."

"Ah! I comprehend the case," said Will. "The *Dower* arrived at Perth about the time the villains were ready to act, and so became the victim of their conspiracy."

"That's the exact truth in the matter. These ruffians got together in a lonely wood near Perth the very night the *Dower* arrived there in ballast from Adelaide, to take aboard a return cargo. Near midnight, when everything was quiet, they swarmed aboard of the ship, as she lay alongside her wharf, and in three minutes thereafter were in complete possession, as the majority of my men were ashore. The victors immediately got the ship under way, making a feint all the next day of going into the Pacific, and then they stood away in this direction. The best of them are poor navigators, and I wonder that the ship has held together so long, the way they have handled her; but here we are."

"Are any of the runaways aboard of the ship at this moment?" asked Will.

"No. They are too apprehensive of pursuit to remain here. They feel safer ashore than on shipboard. There was a man-of-war in port at the moment of our seizure, and it's possible that she has pursued us, as my men all escaped to the wharf as fast as they were driven from their positions, and are sure to have reported the outrage promptly. I was the only man captured by the runaways, and my capture resulted from a blow that left me senseless in their hands."

"Your involuntary voyage with these men must have been one long horror?"

"It has been. My wrists and ancles are swollen to such an enormous size that the miscreants have not been able, in several days, to get their irons upon me. Just feel for yourself."

Will. did so, with many a shudder and thrill of pity. He comprehended what tortures Capt. Dougal had suffered by being bound so long and tightly, and his admiration of the brave man deepened as he inquired:

"How long have you been coming from Australia?"

"What month and day have we now?"

"November, the 27th."

"Then I have not been a prisoner so long as I supposed. The *Dower* was seized on the night of the 25th of October, so that she has been only a little over a month in the hands of these miscreants. I have been chained a large share of the time in the hold, where day and night have been alike to me. My captivity has seemed much longer than it really has been. Thank Heaven, that it is at last ended!"

"It would seem, however, that we must have the runaways for our 'neighbors'—at least for the present. And to these forty-two runaway convicts we can oppose only three men—and one of the three is a madman! The situation is decidedly ticklish."

"I agree with you, Mr. Hawley. But what are we to do?"

Will. took a turn in the darkness to the extreme rear of the cabin, knitting his brows in deep thought.

"We must first consider what these runaways are likely to do," he said. "Now that they have lost their ship, they will have to remain here indefinitely, or embark in their boats. Which course will they probably adopt?"

"They will probably remain here, with a view to seizing the first ship that may call here for fresh water or for a few messes of Kerguelen's Land cabbages. After their late dangers and fatigues, they will not run the risk of putting to sea in these shaky boats until the island has become still more dangerous and fatiguing."

"You are right, Captain. And now a word as to our own course. I suppose we could seize one of these boats and take to the high seas, if the necessity seemed urgent, with the idea of being picked up by some passing vessel?"

"Certainly. With the aid of a bowline and a block or two, with a few pieces of spars, we could get one of the boats afloat, in the course of a night, especially if aided by your madman. But we can do this as well at any other time as to-night, and we will accordingly adjourn any such seizure until I am a little fresher and stronger, and until we see our way clearer. The runaways had no suspicion of any one's being upon the island, and if I could lead them to think that I escaped unaided—"

He reflected earnestly a few moments, as did Hawley.

"You can give them that impression," said the latter. "They bound you very securely, of course, and it would have been simply impossible for you to free yourself unaided. But, after all, you were bound with ropes only, and neither handcuffed nor fettered—"

"They left me in this chair through a spirit of malignant mockery," exclaimed Dougal. "They said I would doubtless be glad to take my place at the head of the table again, and to find myself again in command of the ship, and everything they could think of in that line of vileness."

"What final disposition do they intend to make of you?"

"They intend to kill me—this is beyond all question. I cannot certainly say in what way, but I think they intend to take me ashore in the morning, and put me up as a mark to shoot at. Such, at any rate, was the purport of a remark made to me by Fisty Bantam, just before he took his leave of me."

"Well, you must give them the slip," said Will. thoughtfully. "They will wonder, of course, that you have escaped, but they will soon have forty explanations of the fact. They will say that you were not tied as tightly as was supposed; that you were desperate; that you made extraordinary exertions, and so on. Now, then, as they know nothing of my presence, nor of the madman's, we must give them the impression that you are dead."

"Dead? How can we do so?"

"Have they not been aboard of the ship within a few hours past, running to and fro with lights?"

"Of course—while they were getting their provisions and bedding ready to go ashore."

"You have given up the *Dower* as a total loss, in any and every case?"

Captain Dougal assented.

"Then the best thing we can do is to burn her immediately."

"Burn her?"

"Yes, burn her, Captain, as the first of several hostile measures that we are called upon to take against the enemy. Is there anything on the ship worth moving?"

"Yes; provisions, clothing and arms, and loose timber enough to make a raft upon which to convey these things ashore. All our extra spars are at our service."

"Let's build a raft, then, and load it with such things as we shall be most likely to need during a prolonged stay upon the island. We have several hours before us, in all probability, and will have plenty of time to tow our raft to the land, by means of the halliards we'll fasten to it, and it won't take long to hide our stores in some secret spot with which our madman is familar."

"But why shall we burn the ship?"

"To prevent the runaways from deriving any further benefit from her—to punish them for their wickedness. But there is a still better consideration. If we burn the ship, the runaways will suppose that some of their own men have set her afire accidentally, while rushing to and fro with their lights, and they will also suppose that you have been burned up in her."

"I see. And if they suppose that I have been burned with the ship, they will not look for me, and still less be on their guard against the dangers with which our unseen presence may threaten them. I like the idea, Mr. Hawley. We will take what these villains have left on the ship—or at least all we care to bother with—and then we will destroy the *Dower*, as hard as it is for me to lay violent hands upon her."

"I am glad you approve of my proposition," said Hawley. "We'll set to work at once. I'll just take another look from the deck before we begin."

Slipping from the cabin on this errand, Will. was absent several minutes, when he returned in more haste than had attended his withdrawal. Captain Dougal knew from his footsteps that he was startled.

"What have you seen, or heard?" he demanded, in a whisper.

"There are two men on the beach, with a lighted lantern—two of the runaways, evidently. They seem to be laying off a portion of their clothes, as if about to swim off to the ship."

Dougal arose in a state of excitement akin to consternation.

"You surprise me," he muttered. "Two of them coming here? The fact reminds me of a remark made to me by Bantam, when I told him that I was cold—a remark to the effect that I would soon be warm enough. Is it possible—as it seems, now that I recall Bantam's remark—is it possible that the miscreants intend to burn the vessel?"

"Wait a moment."

Will. flashed on deck again, but came back with increased celerity.

"They are coming aboard," he said. "We have no time to escape. There is just time enough for me to tie you to your chair. I will then post myself, pistol in hand, in the nearest state-room, and be ready to act in any way that may be desirable. There are only two of the men, and I shall not have the least difficulty, the necessity arising, in killing them both."

The disposition of affairs indicated by these words had scarcely been made when a couple of rough looking men came into the cabin, one of them bearing a lantern. They were stripped to the waist, and dripping water.

Their first measure was to take a good look at Dougal.

"There he is!" said the foremost, flashing the rays of his lantern upon the prisoner. "Just as we left him."

"And a fine swim he has cost us!" returned the other, shivering. "How cold it is! A regular Greenland! Let's hurry up."

"All right. I shall be as glad to get back to the camp as you will. The job won't be a long one. The chips are already piled under the main hatch, and in two or three other places, and plenty of oil has been poured upon them. We've only to touch a match to them, and the thing's done. Do you know why Banty wants the ship to be burned up to-night?"

"No."

"Then I'll tell you. He thinks that we may have been pursued by that man-of-war—the *Thunderer*—that lay in Perth harbor the night we captured the *Dower*. He wouldn't be surprised, he says, if the *Thunderer* should come bowling into Christmas Harbor by morning, in the which case we should be caught with the sheep on our backs, and as the *Dower* can't be moved, and as she is too big to be covered with a tarpaulin hat where she is, and as we have got out of her about all there was in her, why, Banty says we must burn her."

"Very good—burn it is," said the other again, looking at Dougal; "but it seems hard to burn up a man in that manner."

"I'll turn him loose, if you think best," said the first speaker grimly; "but there's a word to be said first—just what Banty has said to me. There are ships of war looking for us, and it's possible they'll catch us, in the which case the evidence of this man would hang every mother's son of us."

"Destruction! Do you mean that?"

"Just as much as I mean to live till morning."

"Then I've not the least word to say. Let's touch her off at once."

A third and final glance was given to Dougal, and the couple turned away.

"We'll begin aft, and work forward, so as not to get a fire between us and the shore," rejoined the last speaker. "Good-bye, Dougal. You've heard the why and the wherefore, and are too brave a man to bellow for mercy, since bellowing will not save you."

And with this they left the cabin.

Their footsteps were still echoing in the ears of Capt. Dougal and Hawley, when the latter again cut the bonds of his companion in misfortune, whispering:

"This is horrible! How lucky that I came as I did! We must look sharp, and leave the ship as soon after these two incendiaries as we can."

The ship fired in several places, the two miscreants deputed to this task took their way hastily ashore. The fire did not immediately illuminate the surrounding waters to any extent, and it was owing to this fact that the two ruffians, as they landed and hurried up the sloping shore toward their camp, did not observe how closely they were followed by two dark figures—those of Will. and Dougal—who, upon gaining the shore, hurried away in the direction of the madman's cabin.

CHAPTER XVI.

BROTHER AND SISTER AGAIN.

The next measure of Captain Pedder, in pursuance of his plan of making himself useful to Mrs. Hawley, was to visit the bank in which he kept an account, and in which Minnell & Co. also kept theirs.

The cashier, an excellent, faithful man, as cashiers usually are, was already at his post, and received Pedder with the respect due him as a depositor, and as a gentleman supposed to be honorable and honest.

"Glad to see you at home again, Captain Pedder," said the cashier, shaking hands with him. "Everything is flourishing with you, I hope?"

"Yes, Mr. Imlay, everything—as the state of my account will tell you, if you should chance to notice it," returned Pedder complacently. "I made a cool twenty thousand on my private ventures the last voyage."

"I am glad to hear it. Twenty thousand dollars at a stroke! I'd like a share in that business myself. How was the thing done?"

Pedder explained how he had shipped a vast quantity of boots to Australia, buying them at fifty dollars a case, and selling them at four or five hundred per cent. profit.

"Like owners, like commander," commented the cashier smilingly.

"Hardly, Mr. Imlay. The balance of Minnell & Co. must touch a quarter of a million. They have operated heavily since the discovery of the new gold diggings in Australia in '51. Their ships are in fine repute."

"Well, you are sharing their good fortune, Captain Pedder. We have few individual depositors who show a bigger average balance than you do. What can we do for you this morning?"

"A slight favor only. I gave to Mrs. William Hawley yesterday, in settlement of a little venture I shared with her late husband, a check for two thousand dollars, to her order—"

"Well, you are good for that amount, I think," said Mr. Imlay banteringly. "At any rate, we'll take the risk of paying said check on presentation—"

"Well, no—nothing of the sort, if you please. The check has been stolen by a burglar!"

"Stolen? That's another matter. Then you wish to stop payment?"

"That's the point."

"All right. I'll make a mem. to that effect. Name, Hawley; amount, two thousand dollars."

"Mrs. Hawley has not put her signature to the check, and it is accordingly probable that the check will not be presented, since the burglar would have to forge at least Mrs. Hawley's name before presenting it. As he was a polished sort of villain, however, it is quite possible that he may add a forgery or two to his burglary."

"In any case, we will stop the check, and endeavor to stop the burglar," said the cashier.

A similar arrangement was made in reference to the check of Minnell & Co. for five hundred dollars, to the order of Mrs. Hawley, and Pedder went on his way contentedly to the office of his owners in South street.

A couple of hours later he was informed by a special messenger that the checks had turned up and been secured, and that the party presenting them had been detained in the president's private room, in accordance with his—Pedder's—instructions.

Hurrying to the bank, Pedder was ushered into the presence of the bearer of the checks—a green youth who had just come from the country as a hand on a canal-boat. Tom Breeling had met this unripe barnacle somewhere along the docks, and had hired him for five years, at a hundred dollars per month, to be a messenger in a Wall street bank of which he—Tom—was the president and chief owner.

The tears of this victimized fresh-water navigator were as copious as his honesty was genuine. He had presented the checks as the first of several million similar services which he counted upon rendering his employer in the course of the next five years, and had not conceived the least suspicion of the rascality of which Tom had made him the instrument. His detention had frightened him nearly out of his wits. He had bellowed so loudly that some of the customers of the bank had inquired of its president how he came to set up a slaughter-house in his private office. He had bellowed, in fact, until several customers and as many of the bank officials had collected around him, holding their sides with laughter.

"I wanterg'ome," he was bawling, at the moment of Pedder's arrival. "I wanterg'ome to Sarycuse!"

"Well, here's the gentleman who will tell you whether you can go home or not," said the president, indicating Pedder. "Question him, Captain?"

Pedder assumed a fierce air of reprobation and inquiry, and put several questions to the young man, whose innocence came out of the investigation as clear as the day.

"I think we can let the fellow run," said the president.

"Of course," said Pedder. "It would be cruelty to detain him. You looked for his principal?"

"Yes, but he had vanished."

"I will have him looked for. In the mean time this young 'salt' from Syracuse may have a chance to get seasoned."

A few dollars was made up for the youth, Pedder proposing the measure, and the young man from Syracuse departed.

Pedder waited just long enough to secure the stolen checks, and then hurried to Mrs. Hawley's residence.

Mrs. Piper received him, explaining that Mrs. Hawley had too bad a headache to see him.

This was anything but satisfactory to the earnest suitor, but he concealed his chagrin, and asked if there was anything more he could do for Mrs. Hawley.

"There is," said Mrs. Piper, "if you will not mind the trouble."

"Speak, my dear Mrs. Piper."

"Mrs. Hawley would be pleased to have the money for the checks."

"Nothing is easier. She has only to sign them, and in the course of an hour I will be here again with the money."

The necessary signatures were procured, and Pedder departed upon his errand.

An hour later, he was back again, as he had promised, and again Mrs. Piper received him as pleasantly as possible.

"Here is Mrs. Hawley's receipt for the money," she said, handing Pedder a brief scrap of paper. "Her headache is no better, and she regrets that she cannot see you. She invites you to call again, and will be glad to see you at any time."

This was said with such merely conventional courtesy that Pedder started to his feet, with a genuine emotion that was decidedly unpleasant.

"Of course—many thanks," he stammered incoherently, as he handed over the twenty-five hundred dollars.

But this merely conventional treatment was anything but pleasant to Pedder. It did not open the way to his intended wooing as much as he had hoped and expected that it would.

In fact, the effect of this merely conventional treatment was irritating, in the state of mind in which he found himself.

He realized that he was far from marrying the fair 'widow,' and yet two powerful emotions were hounding him on to that end:

First, his unscrupulous and selfish love.

Second, the possibility that Hawley might escape from his island, and the consequent necessity of Pedder's hastening on his wooing.

A somewhat awkward pause followed the remark last recorded, and then Mrs. Piper made an allusion to the weather. Pedder responded in kind, and in the course of a few moments brought the interview to such a point as to take a sufficiently graceful departure.

Once out of sight from Mrs. Piper's, he made no effort to drive from his features the cloud which had overshadowed them.

"I begin to think I am making a fool of myself," he mused. "I've travelled more than ten miles to-day on Mrs. Hawley's account, and yet she does not care to see me. She may have a headache, of course—all women have headaches all the time—but she could have seen me, if she had wished to."

The stride with which he turned into Bleecker street, on reaching it, was like the stride he was employing the first time we ever saw him—namely, on the day when he heard of Will. Hawley's marriage to Clara Aymar.

On letting himself into his house, he found his sister idling languidly in the parlor, in her showy morning robe, and with her hair still in papers.

At sight of his gloomy visage, she asked him what was the matter.

"A doubt has assailed me," he answered.

"A doubt of what?"

"Of the success of our little plot."

"And why has this doubt assailed you?"

Pedder explained.

His sister laughed softly, and with the air of superiority she sometimes assumed.

"You have the 'blues,' Luke," she said. "Nothing is more natural than that Mrs. Hawley should have a headache. Nothing is more natural than that she should excuse herself from seeing you. You must beware of impatience. You must take your time to this courtship. 'The more haste the less speed,' in this, as in so many other matters. You'll see her the next time you call, no doubt. In any case, the two thousand dollars you have given her will enable her to live in comfortable ease at Mrs. Piper's, and you can certainly find more occasions—with the aid of Tom Breeling—to make yourself useful."

Pedder's manner showed that he was comforted by these observations.

"And now to say a few words about my proposed voyage to the island of Desolation," continued Miss Pedder.

The brother helped himself to a drink of brandy from a cupboard, and indicated that he was giving her his attention.

"I am resolved to sail in the *Childers* the very next voyage," said Miss Pedder. "While you are courting Mrs. Hawley here, I must be off to the rescue and courtship of Hawley elsewhere—in accordance with our programme. I have been having a lot of clothes made, and could start for Desolation at ten minutes' notice."

"Well, what is your plan?"

"Why, I must take Tom Breeling—"

"I can't let you have Tom. I want him here with me. But Tom has a friend in the Bowery who will just suit you—a fellow named Gawler, who has been a clerk in a pawn-shop. Gawler has a wife, which is so much in favor of having him, as you will need a woman attendant. As a measure of preparation, we shall need to print a notice of Mrs. Hawley's death, and I will have it in to-morrow's *Herald*. If seen by Mrs. Hawley or her friends, the notice will be contradicted the following day, of course, but that won't prevent the bogus 'death' from being just as good for you to show to Hawley, when you see him at Desolation. And now for your plan."

"Well, I will take Gawler and his wife as my attendants, and I doubt not that Gawler will serve me as well as Tom Breeling served you, Luke, and so make it necessary for the ship to call at Desolation for fresh water, as she did before—"

The brother shook his head energetically.

"That idea won't answer," he protested. "It won't answer to start those water casks a second time, even if we were sure of a hard squall at the right moment, to give color to the humbug."

Miss Pedder roused up, losing all her listlessness in an instant.

"Then what are we to do?" she asked.

"You must think of some other way of reaching the island."

A long pause succeeded, during which Miss Pedder reflected.

"I am up a stump," she finally declared. "How am I to reach the island? I should think you might help me, Luke. If another call for fresh water is impossible, we must think of some other excuse for calling. You must surely be able to advise me."

"If I were going in the *Childers* myself," said Pedder thoughtfully, "it would be easy to arrange the matter. But as I am to remain here, to woo the fair 'widow,' and as Captain Hooper will probably have command of the clipper, the question before us is not without its difficulties. I think—to offer a definite idea—that you had better pretend to be insane. Your madness will date from the shock you received when informed of the death of the late William Hawley at the island of Desolation. I will not hesitate to mention, as soon as your mental illness becomes known, that you thought a great deal of the said Hawley, and even expected to marry him—"

"Well, you won't be far from the truth in those last observations," said Miss Pedder bitterly.

"I will accordingly cause due credence to be given to your insanity," resumed Pedder. "Your fixed idea must be that Hawley isn't dead, but that he is still alive at the island of Desolation, and you must stick to this idea with all the mad and unreasoning obstinacy of a lunatic. You must add that you can hear the poor fellow calling to you by day and by night to come to his relief. What would any good physician advise in these circumstances? He would say, 'Take her to Desolation; let her see that Hawley is not there, and she'll recover her senses.' You are not obliged to rave and tear your hair. You will fall into a mute melancholy, become shy of everybody—and, in fact, I will keep you properly secluded. It is only necessary for you to be insane on that one point—that Hawley is still alive, and that you must go to the island of Desolation to save him."

"This is all easy enough," commented the sister. "I can put on black, wear a thick vail, and keep out of sight. But what next?"

"Why, I'll speak to my owners about your sad condition. If it's not convenient or advisable to call in a physician, I can forge a good medical certificate, in the form of a note of advice addressed to me by some great luminary, and this letter I will show to Minnell & Co. in the strictest confidence. You know already how handy I am with the pen. My next step will be to suggest to Minnell & Co. that we didn't lose a single hour by our call at Desolation on the last voyage. The voyage out was the shortest, in fact, that the *Childers* has ever made. Then it will be easy to say that another call at Desolation will not cause any delay or damage. And the rest will be easy. When Minnell & Co. see how earnest I am about your voyage to Desolation, and what hopes of your recovery the physician holds out, they will permit the ship to call again at Christmas Harbor, and will direct Captain Hooper to afford you every facility for curing yourself of your mania. You will accordingly go ashore—you will encounter Hawley—an instant cure will be effected, and you will go on to Australia in the society of the man you have so strangely rescued."

"I like the project," said Miss Pedder. "I have already mentioned to several friends that my health is miserable, and that I think of taking a voyage to Australia. My mental malady can increase so rapidly that, after to-day, it will not be advisable for me to see visitors, and I can be so bad, on going aboard the ship, as to recognize no one save you."

"You had better tell Miss Dail this evening that you are going to be absent from home toward a year, and request her to find a new boarding place."

"I will do so. When will the *Childers* sail again?"

"In ten or twelve days. Business was never so lively as at present. I will see Minnell & Co. in the morning about the call at Desolation, and we'll then further discuss the whole matter."

The result of all these steps and discussions can be foreseen.

When the *Childers* sailed for Australia again, Miss Pedder sailed in her, with the reputation of being mildly insane upon some one point that the voyage was expected to set to rights.

Pedder saw her off, and the Mr. and Mrs. Gawler heretofore spoken of, sailed with her as her attendants.

A single fear assailed the sister, as the clipper was about to get under way.

What if Hawley should leave Desolation before her arrival?

A fear, too, assailed Pedder.

The voyage was to be a long one, and it was open to a thousand accidents and evils.

What if his sister, thus starting out upon her mission, should meet with some dread misfortune? What if her feigned insanity should become, through some great shock or suffering, a real and permanent madness?

The course upon which she had entered was certainly a sort of playing with fire.

He had known stern judgments to fall upon that species of wickedness.

It was too late, however, he thought, to turn back—too late to even mention to his sister the gloomy thought that had entered his soul. He had barely time to wish her a pleasant and successful voyage, and to exchange an embrace and a kiss with her, and she was gone—to what fortune? to what fate?

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

AGNES STIRLING.

A TALE OF THE TEXAS FRONTIER.

BY MRS. A. E. BARR.

"A bill for the relief of Robert Stirling and his men." I was leaning over the ladies' gallery of the Texas Senate Chamber when I heard these words, and saw the change they instantly produced over a somewhat indifferent and uninterested house. *Ennui* kindled into enthusiasm, and debate merged into eulogium, so that the bill was finally passed almost by acclamation.

I heard enough to make me intensely curious, and it was therefore no small pleasure to learn that a party of summer tourists, in which I was included, were to be the first bearers of the news to the old man.

His cottage stood on the outskirts of a large cedar brake. It was in the usual Texas order of architecture—two large rooms, with a wide passage between them. The logs had never been painted or dressed, but a luxuriant white jasmine covered it with an almost supernatural loveliness.

Calm and peaceful it looked without, and yet within the greatest of all struggles was going on—the struggle of the Eternal out of Time. That it had been a hard one, in Robert Stirling's case, was quite evident. "Many and evil days" was his own history of life, and I read the confirmation in a scarred and sorrowful face, full of gray old miseries.

A number of wild, rough-looking men were sitting in the shade of some mulberry-trees. They spoke seldom, smoked incessantly, and waited with a sad patience for the end sure to come. And when the sun dropped below the horizon their watch was over. They knew it when they saw their captain's only child walk to the end of the piazza and look with great, dry, yearning eyes to where the sun had left a track of glory behind him. There she was joined by some of the oldest of the men, who strove to comfort her.

There was in this woman's face a wonderful charm, the secret of which I discovered afterward. It was partly the sweet gravity of one who had learnt, in the solemn high places of Nature, a joy beyond laughter; and partly that sense of strength and repose which clothes as with a garment those who have fronted sorrow and triumphed over it. In spite of her weariness and grief, and her crowded house, she urged the ladies of our party to accept the shelter of the cabin. And I, who have a taste for civilization, and a perverse inability to see the luxury of a hammock, gratefully accepted it.

The next three weeks, while my friends were making geological and botanical discoveries, I was getting glimpses of a life pure and unselfish enough for the angels to have desired to look into. I say "glimpses," because I soon found that she did not care to talk of herself, except as incidental to others.

My first interrogatory about any one is generally their birthplace. On this subject I have a theory, and it interests me to see how often truth and surmise agree. But with Agnes Stirling I remained unsatisfied, simply because she did not know herself.

"I was not born here," she told me. "My first memories are of crowds of faces that were not kind to me, of water that seemed to have no end, and of a small vessel, in which we nearly perished."

"We?" I repeated interrogatively.

"That is, my mother and I, and my eldest brother. He was a little baby then, wailing night and day in her arms. He lived to be a noble boy, and to die in her defence."

"But where was Captain Stirling at that time?"

She detected a suspicion of something she did not approve in my voice, and she answered in a tone that was almost caressing:

"Ah, he was not with us. That was where the misery begun and ended. When we got to him we were very happy."

"Do you remember that?"

"It is impossible that ever I should forget it. After we had been a long time on the water, one morning, just at sunrise, we were put into a little boat and rowed toward the land. A man stood waiting for us—a man whom I had never consciously seen, but whom *I knew at sight*. On all that bar of lonely sand he was the only living thing. And he looked so handsome and so happy, as he stretched out his arms and shouted to us. I think he will stand just so to welcome me, when I see him next. When our feet touched the land he could not speak for joy, and I remember well that his first action was to kneel down and kiss my mother's hands. I don't understand even now why he did it, but I am sure it was well done. An ox wagon, driven by that old negro you see smoking before the quarters, brought us here. I have no idea how long it took us. I was a silent child, and never asked many questions, and when I saw the green, cool woods, and the strange beauty and wealth of the flowers, I think I believed we were in heaven. One day I found courage to ask Prince, as he was yoking the oxen, if it were so. He looked at me with a kind of reverence. Many a man, wise in his own eyes, would have laughed at my ignorance; but Prince answered solemnly, 'De little children, Miss Agnes, are allus pretty nigh to de kingdom ob heaven.' I never forgot the look and the words, and I understand them now, though I did not then."

Piece by piece I patched out the years of her childhood, and it made a story startlingly dramatic, and almost incredible to those who have never learnt that adversity sees miracles. But with all its romance, it was still the old story of woman hourly crucifying every selfish thought, and filling her space with lovely deeds and faithful prayers, instead of lingering years.

When Agnes was seventeen years of age, the tragedy occurred which clouded all her future life. She had then three brothers: Robert, nearly sixteen; Alick, twelve; and Harry, seven. Although fifteen years had passed since its occurrence, she was greatly agitated in its recital.

"It is very hard to speak of it," she said, "but I want you to know all; otherwise much that you may hear of my father will seem so savagely cruel. It is, indeed, the only key to that portion of his life with which the public have to do.

"It was on the 24th of October, in the year 1843. There had been slight frosts, and as father was going to the mill, which lay in the river bottom seven miles off, mother proposed that I should go with him, and while the corn was being ground, help to gather some of the winter grapes and pecans which abound in the valley, and to which the frosts had now added the last delicate flavor. I was a little astonished at the proposal, for Robert and Alick generally went on these errands; but I knew mother meant it as a great kindness, more especially as there was butter to make, and both negro boys had gone that morning to the cedar brake for rails.

"The truth was, I had a little trouble of my own at the time—a love affair which my father, wisely I have no doubt, interdicted. For some days I had felt hard toward him in consequence, and my mother's good, wise heart foresaw that a few hours together would put all right. So she brought me a clean dress and my white sun-bonnet, and looked into my face with such an understanding sympathy that I could not resist the impulse to twice turn back and kiss her. Oh! I thank God for this memory. Father was pleased at my attention, and smiled kindly at me as I took my place beside him. When we got to the bottom of the hill I pushed my bonnet back and looked round. She stood watching us, and shading her face with her hands. Father turned at the same moment, and she waved us a last adieu.

"A very last one, as it miserably proved. In less than an hour afterward she was slain by the Comanches, after seeing her eldest boy almost cut to pieces in her defence. Alick and Harry, in the very beginning of the attack, had been bound with raw-hides, and given up to the care of two inferior savages.

"And yet that day father was in such wild, gleeful spirits as I had never before seen. Evidently he had no presentiment of any trouble until we reached the bottom of the hill on our return. The absence of all signs of mother or the boys silenced him. In another moment he had noticed a thin smoke coming from the open door. With a cry and a bound like nothing human, he sprang to the ground. A few minutes told us all our misery. The bodies had been set on fire, but enough remained to identify mother and Robert, and my father guessed only too well the fate of the younger boys.

"The earthen floor and heavy logs had saved the house, but I am sure neither of us at that moment thought of it as a mercy. The negroes were still in the brake, and our only horses with them. But by nightfall the whole country was roused, and following a madman in pursuit of the murderers.

"Some of the neighbors took me away, but I could not stop. If father should come home I knew he would expect me, and my heart was breaking for the dear little fellows whose lot was worse than death. I passed five days alone; they looked like years; and then at midnight two men carried a strange Robert Stirling into his house, raving with brain-fever. I say 'strange,' because no one ever again saw the same generous, kindly, cheerful man who had gone with me to gather nuts and grapes a week before.

"How he suffered for the next three months, when he could do nothing else but suffer, none but God knows. But in half a year he was in the saddle again, at the head of some of the most reckless men in the country. For nearly three years all search was unavailing, but nothing daunted or discouraged him. Only, every time he came home, he came a sterner and a harder man. And soon the wildest stories of his cunning and cruelty and reckless bravery were in every mouth. I do not believe any one blamed him much, and I, I loved him better than ever. And, oh, after Alick was recovered, crippled and dying, and I knew how little Harry had been almost tortured into the grave, there were hours in which I not only pitied but excused him."

"Then you saw one of your brothers again?"

"Yes; father found him with a party of Comanche horse-thieves, in the fourth year of his captivity. They say he took fearful vengeance for the boy's sufferings. I cannot blame him. Alick lingered many months, and became so dear to me in all those hours of suffering, that I almost wished to die with him, only that it would have been cowardly."

"You think so?"

"Yes, I think so. Who could have taken my place the last year? And then what a joy I should have missed!"

"A joy!"

"Certainly. I have been loved again. All my years of patient waiting and silent prayer acknowledged and answered. I have had many happy days the last seven years, and for more than that time every family in the county has rested in safety under the shadow of my father's name. For a long time he has been a just, as well as a brave man, and I am glad because he lived to know the State acknowledged his services, and provided for his child and friends."

"And what will you do now?"

"Wait. There is always duty. When everything else is gone, duty remains. I could not desert old Prince and Jeff, and the old men who have made this cabin for years a shelter, in sickness and bad weather."

"Is that all you will have?"

"That, *and God*. My solitude is not empty, and I shall find some good to do in every day."

I looked at the calm, strong face, and read in it a sermon not made with hands. "Lo here," it said, "is a woman born for adversity, for she has triumphed over it, and built of it a sanctuary for all that are sorrowful and afflicted."

THE HEAVY BURDEN.

A LIFE LESSON.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

James Downer was a young man of high social standing, and his influence in the town where he had lived from his birth was marked. He had been a leader in the Lyceum; he had been honored with responsible positions of town office; and he was one of the pillars of the religious society of which he was a member. In fact, he was a model man, and a majority of those who knew him would have said that James Downer could do no wrong.

One day James came into his home with a cloud upon his brow. His wife saw it, and asked its cause. At first he tried to evade the point, but when he was pressed he told her that his rupture with Philip Evans had come to a head.

"It is done!" he said impressively. "With that man I shall have nothing more to do!"

Mrs. Downer looked surprised and pained.

"O, no," she urged. "You do not mean that you will break with him entirely? You will not sunder all the ties of our long and pleasant friendship?"

James Downer brought his clenched hand down upon the table with vehemence as he declared:

"Ellen, I have done with him! I shall not take his hand—I shall not speak with him—again!"

"James!"

"Don't say anything more, Ellen. I am fretted now as much as I can bear. You know not how that man has betrayed me."

"I know," said Ellen, "that Philip Evans is an impulsive, quick-tempered, and often heedless, man. I know that his emotions guide him more than does his reason. But I never thought that he could do a malevolent thing."

"You have not truly known him, Ellen."

"Have *you* truly known him?"

"No. This very event proves that I have *not* known him."

"You have been mistaken in him?"

"Yes,—sadly mistaken."

"Now look you, James: Is there not more likely to be error and mistake in the passion of this unfortunate hour, than that all the joy and friendship of the past years have been a mistake?"

"Ellen," said the husband, with an injured look, "I trust my own wife will not join my enemies!"

"Pardon me, James. I meant no wrong. We'll have sunshine in our own home, let what will betide without."

And the discussion closed with a kiss. Ellen watched her husband as he went toward his office, and she said to herself, as she saw him moving away with his head bowed,—

"There can be no pure sunshine for thee, James, while that burden is upon thy spirit."

The case, in brief, was this: There had been a disruption and reorganization of the great political parties of the land, and James Downer and Philip Evans—friends and companions from boyhood—had found themselves politically separated; and the time came when they were rival candidates for the same office. In truth, neither had known of the nomination of the other until the thing had been done; but the event was a fixed fact, and the respective constituents of the two men held them to the nomination and the canvass. In the contest money was spent, and the strife was high. Bitter things were said, and strange things were done. James Downer was quick to detect the evil of the opposition, but in his own party he did not look for evil—it was his business, as a consistent representative of his constituency, to look only for the good. And as the war waxed warm, personalities entered into the conflict; and thus it came about that enmity came in where friendship had been.

There is no need that we should tell all that was said and done. The same social problem is being repeated every day, and blessed is he who hath not fallen under the chilling shadow.

James Downer nerved himself for the ordeal, and deemed that he was acting the manly part. He would not surrender his dignity of manhood—he would not bow down beneath the injury.

Sabbath came—the day of rest—the day of peace. James Downer arose, and his heart swelled with gratitude as he found God's beautiful sunlight upon the earth; and his gratitude found vent in prayerful utterance when he found his family gathered, in health and strength, around the matin board.

Later he went with his family to the village church, and as he entered the vestibule he came face to face with Philip Evans. A half smile was upon Philip's face, but James turned coldly away, and would not notice him. And the chill was at his heart from that moment. Philip's pew was not far from his own, and if he turned his head the face of his old-time friend was present with him. The anthem awoke no responsive music in his soul; the prayer found no echo of worship in his struggling spirit; and the sermon fell upon stony ground so far as he was concerned.

As it was at the church, so it was at the Lyceum; and so it was at other gatherings.

By and by the evening of the prayer-meeting came. These were really conference meetings, at which the lay brethren and sisters could both pray and preach; and James Downer had been one of the chief spokesmen. It had been his wont to interest these meetings by short and pithy speeches upon the great moral and social problems of the day. He was a deep student; a rational thinker; and as he was a natural orator, his remarks on these occasions were looked for with as much interest as attached to the ordinary run of sermons.

The evening came, and James Downer was present with his wife and oldest child. And Philip Evans was also present. The aged minister opened the services, as usual, and several of the brethren spoke; and several pieces were sung.

Where was Brother Downer? At each pause all eyes were turned upon him. But he did not arise. At length the minister called upon him by name, and he begged that he might be excused for that evening. He did not feel like speaking.

And as he walked homeward that night a great weight was upon him. What was it that had prevented him from speaking in the house of God?—His wife was silent, and his meditations had free scope.—Why had he shrank from raising his voice in social worship? Simply because the burden upon his spirit bore him down,—because the still small voice whispered to him that he had no right to offer advice to others while in his own bosom he nurtured an enemy to all peaceful, religious feeling. James Downer was a rational man, and he knew where the trouble lay. But—could he avoid it? Could he throw off the burden? Should he pass another week of self-imposed penance? Should he suffer the pain through all the coming time?

Morning came again, bright and beautiful; and a new resolve was in the man's heart. He lifted the burden of hatred from his spirit, and cast it behind him into the oblivion of the past. And then he went forth, and sought Philip Evans, and he met him at his own door.

"Philip," said he, "let us begin again—let us begin where the old friendship left off. I can bear this burden no longer!"

"God bless you, James! with all my heart!"

* * * * * * *

When James Downer came in to dinner his face wore the old warm sunlight, and his voice sounded with the old music.

"James!"

"Hush, Ellen! The bitter flood is spent. Let its grief be forgotten as its gloom is dissipated."

"And Philip—"

"Is my friend, now, as ever!"

And when the next season of conference came in the old church James Downer spoke as he had never spoken before. His heart was full; and—the heavy burden being cast off—its fulness was free and buoyant, and its notes jubilant.

WIT AND HUMOR.

A SCIENTIFIC father was explaining to his little son, four years old, "the philosophy of the growth of trees," when the little pupil was struck with an idea, and exclaimed, "Papa, are *you* growing any taller?" "No, my son; why do you ask?" "'Cause the top of your head is coming through your hair." The lesson was adjourned.

A LITTLE girl who was visiting the family of a neighbor, heard them speak of her father as a widower, and on her return home, said, "Pa, are you a widower?" "Yes, my child. Don't you know that your mother is dead?" "Why, yes, I know that mother is dead; but then you always told me you were a New Yorker."

A BOY, six years old, living on Murray Hill, having been much lectured by his father on the babyishness of crying when any calamity happens, cheered the paternal heart the other morning by saying, "Harry B. cried nearly all day 'cause his father died; but if *you* should die, pa, *I* wouldn't cry a bit."

"WHO is he?" asked a passer-by, of a policeman who was endeavoring to lift a drunken man from the gutter. "Can't say, sir," replied the officer; "he can't give any account of himself." "Of course not," rejoined the stranger. "How can you expect an *account* from a man who has lost his *balance*?"

"NICE weather for corn," said a minister up the North river, to one of his parishioners. "Yes," said the old farmer, "but bad for grain and grass." A few days later they met again. "A fine rain we had yesterday," said the minister; "good for grass and grain." "Yes," said the old farmer, "but awful bad for corn."

"WHEN was Rome built?" asked a school-committeeman of the first class in ancient history. "In the night," answered a bright little girl. "In the night!" exclaimed the astonished examiner. "How do you make that out?" "Why, I thought everybody knew that 'Rome wasn't built in a day.'"

A FRENCH inventor recently made a trial in public of a pair of boots designed to aid one to walk on the water. The boots floated beautifully; but the trifling circumstance that they floated wrong side up nearly occasioned the death of the inventor.

A REPORTER for a Milwaukee paper, in chronicling accidents, says, "A deaf man, named Rond, was run down and killed by a passenger train yesterday. The unfortunate man was injured in a similar way about a year ago."

A COLORED soprano singer that went from Boston to Great Britain having met with pecuniary success, a company has made arrangements to export to England a large supply of black bass.

A "PERSONAL" advertisement in a Paris newspaper says, "Eliza, you can now return to the house without a shock to your delicacy and sensitiveness, as the boil on my nose is gone."

THE Duluth people won't allow the bodies of persons dying of the small-pox to be buried in their cemetery, because there are several unvaccinated corpses interred there.

A PHRENOLOGIST who experienced three collisions on the New York Central Railroad, thought the *bump* of destructiveness was very prominent on that route.

"I AM not myself at all to-day," said a bore to a wit. "No matter," was the reply; "whoever else you may be, you're a gainer by the change."

A SOUTHERN politician, named A. G. Allen, is annoyed because the telegraph and printers continually put him down as A Gallon.

A BIG DOSE OF 'LASSES AND WATER—One hundred and thirty-five blooming damsels all bathing in the surf at one time.

AN Alabama editor mildly alludes to his rival as "a reservoir of falsehood and an aqueduct of mendacity."

"I'LL take the responsibility," as a doating father said, when he held out his arms for the baby.

CATTLE are dumb beasts, but by gathering themselves together, they can make themselves *herd*.

THE sting of a bee carries conviction with it. It always makes a man a bee-leaver at once.

AN old hat is said to be like an iron kettle because it represents hard wear.

CURRENT ITEMS.

AT Highland Mills, N. Y., about two months ago, an old woman had a fight with a skunk, during which the animal seized one of her fingers in his mouth, and held on so hard that its jaws had to be forced open before the finger could be released. The wound healed, and nothing more was thought of the affair until a few days ago, when symptoms resembling those of hydrophobia were manifested—convulsive movements of the limbs, horror at the sight of water, etc., which increased in violence until the patient expired in great agony.

A SINGULAR accident occurred recently upon the White Mountain Notch road, N. H. A stage-coach on its way from Ammonoosuc station to Crawford House was struck by lightning during a thunder-storm, the horses thrown down but not killed, and two passengers sitting on the top of the vehicle were somewhat injured. Their clothes were scorched, their gold watches and watch chains melted in their pockets, and one of the men was burned upon the breast, the lightning also completely encircling his body.

A LITTLE nine-year-old girl appeared at the Union Depot at Indianapolis, last week, on her way to Chicago, with no money to pay her fare. Her father, she said, put her on the train at a station, the name of which she could not remember, and gave her a ticket for Chicago, which she had lost. She appeared very anxious to go to Chicago, in the hope of finding her mother, rather than to return to her father's house.

A MAN wishing to steal a night's lodging, lay down in a New London depot, after putting his money in his boots for safe-keeping, and went to sleep. In the morning, on awaking, he discovered that his boots and money were both gone, whereat he was exceedingly angry, and declared he "didn't suppose there was anybody in the world mean enough to pull off a fellow's boots, that way, while he was asleep."

A LADY living in Winsted, Conn., arose from her bed about midnight, last Monday night, went up Main street in her night clothes, rang the bell of a drug store and called for medicine—all in a sound sleep. When the druggist asked, "Who's there?" she awoke, and fell down overcome with fright. She was carried back to her home, where her husband was sleeping, profoundly unconscious of her absence.

A PITIABLE SPECTACLE.—A Boston paper says, "On Saturday was witnessed the pitiable spectacle of a young woman of respectable connections, and twenty-four years of age, driving through town terribly intoxicated. She went up the road at full speed, and offered a drink of gin to several of the passers by."

THEY have a remarkable dog in Auburn, N. Y., that, whenever he loses his master in the streets, makes for the street railway, gets on the cars, and keeps strict watch until he reaches the street on which his master lives, and then jumps off, and jogs up the street to his home.

A DEER ran into a bayou to escape a party of Georgia hunters, when he and the two hounds that followed him had a desperate fight with two alligators, that finally gobbled up the whole lot and slid away from the gory waters with the best meal they had captured for many a day.

A FEW days ago, a woman in Indianapolis became so enraged at her little son, who is only six years old, that she attempted to push him under the wheels of an advancing railroad train, and would have succeeded if a policeman had not interfered to save him.

A BEAUTIFUL church in London, which had just been nearly completed, at an expense of two hundred thousand dollars, was burnt to the ground on the thirteenth of July, by the accidental fall of a candle upon some asphalte.

AN aged man, seventy-three years old, residing in Wakefield, R. I., made desperate attempts to cut his throat the other evening, and was with difficulty prevented from accomplishing his purpose.

PROF. LA ROCHE recently died in New Orleans from the effect of drinking water that had passed through lead pipes, and his daughter was made totally and permanently blind from the same cause.

AS a lady in Oneida County, in this State, was attempting to teach a little son the use of a revolver, the child shot her through the breast, inflicting a fatal wound.

AN Arkansas woman lately tarred and feathered her husband, whereupon he declared that if she did it again, he would quit the house for ever.

A BOY at Underhill, Vt., has just coughed up a beech-nut which he got into his lungs two years and a half ago.

THE colored people of Lexington, Ky., are reported as paying taxes on four million dollars' worth of real estate.

THE STORY OF THE WRECK.

BY NATHAN D. URNER.

The battered hulk still lies in the sand,
And its quarter still in the high tide swings,
And still, as of old, the sea-birds wheel,
Cutting the air with their angry wings.
I remember how, in my boyish days,
I wandered here with a fisher-girl,
And how we would laugh at the lazy gulls,
And watch the long waves comb and curl.

But often her bright brown eyes grew sad,
And her fair face grave, as she gazed on the wreck,
And told me how, in an olden storm,
Her mother and she had been washed from the deck.
This battered hulk—a proud ship then—
Had struck, with a crash, on our lonely shore,
In the terrible gloom of a stormy night,
And at dawn next morning she was no more.

The broken hull, with fragments of wreck,
Strewed the shore at the ebbing tide,
With many a drowned and mangled form—
Mariner, passenger—side by side.
But one was living: a gentle babe,
Folded fast in the death caress
Of a lady, young and wondrous fair,
Jewelled, and robed in costly dress.

The old fisherman who found them first,
Rushed, with the babe, to his simple dame;
But when he returned to the edge of the sea
The wild shore harpies had scented their game.
Jewel and trinket, and every sign
That might have hinted of name or race,
Had been ruthlessly torn from the helpless dead,
Though nothing had marred its beauty and grace.

They buried her under the beetling cliff;
And the little waif thus cast ashore
Grew up as a simple fisher-girl,
Beloved by all, though nameless and poor.
We never could know were she countess or serf,
Princess or lady, or peasant born;
But at times, when crossed, her eyes would flash,
She would stamp her bare feet on the sand in scorn.

No matter. While yet in her youth she died,
And her grave is under the same dark cliff
Where, long ago, the mother was laid:
Both can be seen from a passing skiff.
But birth and name, to the fisher-girl,
Can be no longer a mystery.
And this is the story of this old wreck
That moulders still by the lonely sea.

A BONE of CONTENTION;

—OR—

The Waldemar Succession.

By MRS. HARRIET LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE HAMPTON MYSTERY," "THE BAILIFF'S SCHEME," "THE LADY OF KILDARE," "THE OLD LIFE'S SHADOWS," "A DARING GAME," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE BARRIER BETWEEN THEM.

The discomfited villain Bing, whose nefarious design had been so promptly and thoroughly defeated, in the very moment of his success, by Honor's faithful maid, struggled quickly to his feet, breathing a torrent of curses upon the brave girl, whose frantic screams continued to ring through the cottage, and to penetrate even to the street.

"Hush, you cat!" cried Bing, a deadly threatening in his eyes. "Hush, or I'll strangle you!"

He bounded toward her with the look of a demon in his eyes.

Lucky, still clutching the long false beard she had torn from his face, retreated toward the door, keeping her eyes upon him as if he had been a wild beast whom she hoped to subdue by her intense gaze. And her screams came quicker and faster, pealing forth like alarm-bells.

Bing, in an agony of fright and rage, hurled himself upon her. One hand sought her throat; the other groped for her pocket, in which she had thrust the certificate of marriage.

A moment more, and he would have secured it. But the Providence that watches over the weak and the defenceless had not abandoned Lucky or her young mistress.

At the very crisis of the struggle, when the maid's power of resistance began to fail her, and her screams were hushed in the tightening grasp of her enemy, there came a swift rushing through the little hall-way, and the sound of flying feet approaching the door of the bed-chamber, whence Lucky's screams had issued.

Bing heard the sounds of approach, and, with a wild oath, he caught his beard from Lucky's loosened grasp, and darted into the little parlor, closing the door behind him.

The bedroom door opened and Honor Glint came in swiftly, calling upon the name of her maid. At the same moment Bing rushed out of the parlor into the hall, opened and shut the house door violently, and then sped up to his own room.

Lucky, gasping for breath, with the livid marks of strangling fingers upon her throat, tottered toward her young mistress with a gurgling cry, and sank down into the nearest chair, faint and trembling, unable to speak.

Honor threw off her wrappings hastily, and brought water, and chafed the girl's hands, moving with a ready courage and self-possession which never failed her in an hour of need.

"Oh, Miss Honor!" the maid gasped presently, her wild glances roving about the room. "Has he gone?"

"There is no one here but you and me, Lucky," said Honor soothingly. "You are quite safe. Has any one been here, or have you been ill?"

"He has been here—Mr. Moer's man!" breathed Lucky, in a low, horrified voice. "He came to steal the marriage lines. He must be in the other room—"

"He is gone. I heard some one close the outer door a moment ago."

Lucky gave a little sob of relief, and drew forth the crumpled paper she had so bravely rescued.

"Take it," she said. "You must not leave it in your desk, Miss Honor. That wretch will find his way back and steal it. Look! your desk is open. He may have stolen your marriage ring—"

"He cannot have done that, Lucky, for I put it in my pocket-book while I was waiting for you at the pastry-cook's shop in Bolton, you remember, upon the very morning of my marriage. But he may have taken something else. I must see."

She examined her open trunk and rifled desk, but discovered that nothing had been stolen. Then she thrust the marriage certificate into her own pocket, and hurried into the little parlor, followed by Lucky.

The condition of the various boxes attested that Bing had searched them thoroughly. Honor flew to her jewel case, and passing by all her trinkets, sought and found the small black onyx ball which Bing had noticed, and which has been minutely described to the reader.

"So long as he did not take this," she cried, "I have reason to be thankful. I have been careless to leave it in an open box. This little ball, Lucky, is the most valuable of all my possessions—even more valuable to me than the paper you just gave me. But tell me how the man Bing got into the house. Were you all alone in the house when he came? The paper looks as if you had fought for it."

Lucky related the particulars of her recent adventure—how she had been at work in the kitchen below, when she fancied she heard a stealthy movement in her mistress' bedroom; how she had crept up stairs, and had seen a bearded man kneeling by Miss Glint's trunk, reading a paper which she recognized as the certificate of Honor's marriage to Darrel Moer; how she had leaped upon him, clutched the paper, and plunged her hands into his beard and torn the mass of hair loose from his face, revealing his hideous identity.

Honor listened shudderingly. She sat down on a low stool before the fire, turning the little onyx ball slowly in her hands, while the tiny diamond sparks set in its encircling band emitted little red gleams and sparkles in the fire-light.

"You're a brave girl, Lucky," she said gratefully. "I shall not forget your defence of this paper, which may possibly be of great importance to me. At any rate, since its possession is deemed so important by Darrel Moer that he sends a thief to steal it from me, it behooves me to guard it carefully."

"He might easily have stolen that little black ball," said Lucky. "I knew you thought the world of it, Miss Honor, but I had no idea that it was worth more than all your jewelry. Did it cost so much, Miss Honor?"

"I don't know how much it cost, Lucky," said Honor thoughtfully; "but it is very precious to me. Some day, perhaps, I will tell you its story."

"The man is certainly gone, Miss Honor," said Lucky, "and I am afraid my pudding will be all burned up. I'll go down and see to it, if you please, Miss. If you should want me, I shall hear the slightest tap on the floor."

She hastened to the kitchen, quite herself again.

Honor continued to hold the little onyx ball in her hands, looking at it after a thoughtful fashion, her mind, however, more busy at the moment with Darrel Moer and his valet than with her cherished possession.

She had never told to Lucky any of the particulars of her history. Her maid had believed Honor to be the actual and only daughter of Capt. Glint, until Honor's expulsion from the Red House had induced the young lady to confide in her maid the fact that she was only the child of Capt. Glint's adoption. But Lucky still believed her young mistress to be a relative of the kindly captain who had been a father to her, and the maid had formed a theory of her own in regard to Honor which was already become a belief.

The little ball then, of whose history Lucky knew nothing, was simply a trinket which the child Honor had worn, attached to a chain encircling her neck, at the time when Capt. Glint had first seen her in her nurse's arms in the streets of Valetta.

The nurse, who had given her name to the captain as Margaret Cropsey, had apparently attached the utmost importance to the odd little ornament, and Capt. Glint had kept it carefully until Honor was old enough to take charge of it, having an idea that it might at some future period afford a clue to the girl's parentage.

The ball slipped from Honor's hand to the floor. She picked it up and examined it carefully, fearing that the fall might have injured it.

"It is not hurt," she murmured. "It might have cracked open. It seems perfectly solid, but how easily such a ball might be made hollow. I could almost fancy a hidden spring somewhere in this tiny gold band around the middle of it, but that's all nonsense. The band is put on to support the loop through which I pass my chain. I wonder if this odd little ball belonged to my mother. My mother! How strangely the words sound to me! My mother! Who was she? Where did she die? Who was my father? Have I relatives anywhere in this wide world—an uncle, an aunt, or a grandfather? I seem to stand all alone in the world, yet perhaps somewhere—possibly here in England—there is a home, even if a humble one, where I have a claim."

The thought was strange as new.

She brought forth a slender gold chain from her jewel box and strung the ball upon it. Then she clasped the chain about her neck under her dress, where the ball was completely hidden from sight, and resolutely putting away from her all speculations into the unknown, she engaged in packing away her various belongings.

Meanwhile the villain Bing waited in his room for some outcry of alarm, some examination of the upper chambers, by Honor and her maid. But as none was made, he realized that his *ruse* in opening and shutting the house door had been successful, and that his continued presence in the house was unsuspected.

"They'll be on their guard now," he mentally decided. "Miss Glint will carry the certificate on her person. If Mr. Moer wants the paper now, he'll have to take her also. I don't believe I shall be able to get into her rooms again, and if I do I sha'n't find what I want."

As Lucky had penetrated his disguise, he dared not show himself in Miss Brown's rooms, and accordingly feigned illness. He put on a hideous gown, and darkened his room, and lay back at his ease in his arm-chair.

Miss Brown's servant-of-all-work brought up his dinner to him, and waited upon him, delivering various kindly messages from her mistress. Bing responded in a very weak and very faint voice, declaring that the sea air was too bracing for him, and that he felt a terrible prostration of all his strength. He regretted that he could not take tea with Miss Brown, whose kindness to him was engraven upon his soul so deeply that death even could not efface it.

Nevertheless, Mr. Bing managed to utterly devour the delicate little feast that had been prepared for him, leaving not the smallest fragment.

The servant carried down the dishes, and Miss Brown came up, all fluttering anxiety, to inquire into the health of her lodger.

She had put on her best gown, and her company manners also, and desired to bathe Bing's "poor head" with a solution of camphor, and gave him her own bottle of sal-volatile, and entreated to be allowed to send for a physician. Under this display of solicitude, Bing concluded to revive a little, and spoke in a stronger voice, and uttered flatteries such as had never before greeted the ears of the ill-favored spinster, and which consequently delighted her to the verge of intoxication. She thought him the most delightful person she had ever seen, and did not shrink from telling him so.

"You shall not be deprived of your tea in the society of a lady, Mr. Watson," said Miss Brown energetically. "You are not able to come down stairs, so I'll come up stairs. You have a little sitting-room here, and I can't see any impropriety in allowing my tea-kettle to boil upon your hob. The most censorious person could not find fault with my tea-kettle if it boiled upon your hob, could they, Mr. Watson?"

"Certainly not, madam," answered Bing languidly. "And *he* couldn't find fault with your jam and toast for reposing for a brief space upon my table. I'm a curate, you know, and the cloth, Madam, the cloth makes all little courtesies between us proper and innocent."

"Very true," said Miss Brown, with an air of immense relief, tossing her head. "So it is settled that I shall take tea with you, Mr. Watson. Ah, there's a knock at the door. I must leave you for the present. Try to sleep, there's a dear—Mr. Watson."

She checked herself and went out giggling, simpering, and trying to blush.

"Poor old goose!" said Bing to himself, as he heard her descend the stairs laboriously. "I didn't know I was so fascinating. I hope my beard is on straight. If I wanted a wife, which I don't, I don't know as I could do better than to pick up this old party, but I think I won't. There's no use in having my punishment commence on earth."

He kept a close watch during the remainder of the day and evening upon the house door, but Miss Glint and her maid remained studiously within doors. Miss Brown also did not quit the house again.

The oddly assorted pair, Miss Brown and Bing, took tea together in the room of the latter, and after tea the spinster lingered for a whole hour, inquiring into Bing's fictitious history, and giving harrowing details of her life as an under-teacher in a ladies' school, and hinting how well her discipline had fitted her to become a curate's wife.

"Hang it all!" muttered Bing, when she departed at last, with her tea-kettle and tray. "The woman will compel me to marry her before the week is up. She has laid regular siege to me. How she did simper when I complimented her beautiful hair, and as true as sin it was a wig, and never cost her three guineas! It must have grown upon the head of an African, and was coarse enough for a door-mat."

The next day Honor went out for a walk on the promenade by the sea, and took her maid with her, but Miss Brown and her servant were both in the house, and Bing could not have made a movement outside his room without their knowledge.

About three o'clock, when Honor was again in her snug little sitting-room, Sir Hugh Tregaron called.

Miss Brown intended to refuse him admittance, but as she was in Bing's room at the moment with some strengthening drink she had concocted for him, the servant-of-all-work admitted the young Baronet and ushered him into Honor's room.

Honor arose from her seat at a farther window, and came forward to meet her visitor, her face pale with eagerness, her vivid eyes speaking the question she dared not ask.

Sir Hugh closed the door quietly. He saw that they were alone, Lucky being in the inner room. He was pale and very grave, and a shadow lay heavily upon his grand brows. He held out his hands and took both of Honor's hands in his, and so held them for a moment in silence. The girl's heart throbbed wildly, her breath came suffocatingly, and her hands fluttered nervously like birds.

"Honor," he said, with an infinite tenderness that soothed her and calmed her upon the instant, "Honor, I have bad news for you. I visited a lawyer yesterday in Liverpool—prepare yourself for an opinion which dooms us both to sorrow! He says that although your guardian's permission was necessary to your marriage, and although Darrel Moer can be indicted for perjury for falsely declaring you to be of age, that—that—your marriage with him is valid, and cannot be annulled!"

The young face upon which the Cornish Baronet's gravely tender eyes remained fixed grew paler, and for one moment a wave of anguish swept over it, convulsing every feature. Then it grew brave again and calmly sweet, and the grand eyes met those of Sir Hugh in an expression of patient heroism.

"It is all my own fault!" she murmured. "Oh, that mad, fatal marriage! The act of one half hour must blight all our lives—oh no, not your life, Hugh—not yours! I must bear my sorrow alone."

"Not alone, Honor," he said, with a sigh that was almost a moan. "We must bear the burden together. I shall never love any woman save you, and I will never marry any woman but you. I will marry you, Honor, or I will go down to my grave unwedded!"

The girl drew her hands from him and looked up at him piteously. He longed to take her in his arms and lavish caresses upon her. He longed to rain kisses upon her face, her eyes, her mouth. Even in his own awful agony of mind he yearned to comfort her, with a yearning that filled his being—but he could not! There was a barrier between them that he could not pass. A tie that was indissoluble bound her to another; and though that other might never possess her, yet Sir Hugh must stand afar from her. The caresses of lovers—the fond embrace—the tender epithets which spring so naturally from loving hearts to loving lips—all these were not for them.

But though he might school his tongue, or restrain its speech, he could not school his eyes. All his hopeless love for her looked from their gray depths now.

"Hugh, it is all over between us," said Honor brokenly. "All over! I cannot bind you to my broken life. You will leave me—forget me—marry another in time, and I shall be to you only a memory. Hugh, it must be so. I am—oh, God pity me!—I am bound to another than you, and death only can set me free. Your life and mine lie apart from this hour. I cannot accept a devotion which I can never repay."

"Honor, since we cannot call ourselves lovers, let us be friends," said Sir Hugh. "I will wait for you years, if need be—or forever. If we may not marry here, then we shall be together in that celestial country where 'there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage.' This is my decision, Honor, and it will never know a change. I shall be 'faithful unto death!'"

"But, oh, Hugh," cried the passionate young voice, trembling and quivering with its weight of woe, "how can I bear the desolation I have brought upon you? And I thought—I thought—"

"Hush, Honor, I know all you would say. I know all you feel. Let us talk now of yourself and your relations to Darrel Moer," said Sir Hugh, compelling himself to calmness. "You know the worst. Moer cannot compel you to live with him, even should he desire to do so. Though legally bound to him, you need not take his name even. On the other hand, you have not sufficient grounds on which to base a suit for divorce. Sit down, Honor. You are very weak."

He led her to the sofa, but himself retreated to a chair at a little distance and sat down wearily.

"I cannot go to your aunt's house under this view of the circumstances," said Honor, after a little pause, speaking more firmly now, the sweet calmness coming back to her brave, sad eyes. "I have no claim upon her since—since I am not to look forward to a marriage with you. And I cannot stay here longer. Only yesterday, Darrel Moer's valet entered my rooms in disguise and stole the certificate of my marriage to his master. Lucky discovered him, and snatched back the paper, and I have it now. I cannot conceive why Moer should desire to possess himself of that certificate. Its destruction would not annul the marriage. There remains the church register."

"And in due time, your marriage to Darrel Moer will also be registered at Somerset House, London," said Sir Hugh. "The officer who has charge of the chapel register is obliged to forward it. All the marriages in England are ultimately registered at Somerset House."

This ultimate registration had been prevented, however, by the daring act of Darrel Moer in causing to be abstracted the leaf from the chapel registry. There was in existence no legal registration of Honor's marriage, and no legal and indisputable evidence of it, save and excepting the certificate which had been obtained by Lucky Banner's forethought, and preserved to Honor through Lucky Banner's courage.

"I might go back to the school," said Honor, "but I fear my old teachers would not receive me. Miss Brown used to teach there, and she has given me warning that I must leave her house to-day, or to-morrow morning, at the latest. I feel positive she would prevent my being taken back into the school until papa comes. I cannot go to papa. I think I shall have to advertise for a situation as governess."

"I think," said Sir Hugh, "that you are not at liberty to decide the question of your future before the return of Captain Glint to England. You are his daughter still, and have forfeited none of your claims upon his love. He will be absent still some eight weeks. You cannot remain without a home during that period, and subject to the persecutions of Moer. I propose that you spend this interval of time with my aunt, Lady Thaxter, who is prepared to welcome you as a daughter. I have received a letter from her this afternoon, and it incloses one to you. Read them both, Honor."

He produced a double letter, placing it in Honor's hands.

The letter to Sir Hugh was one that a mother might have written him, full of sympathy for Honor, and full of pity for Sir Hugh. Honor's heart warmed to the writer. The inclosure to herself was a kindly, affectionate missive, full of balm and sweetness, such a letter as could emanate only from a large and loving heart. It urged Honor to come to Lady Thaxter immediately, and her ladyship took occasion to say that she should come to Southport for Miss Glint in person, but an invited guest had arrived at her house from the Continent, and she must therefore delegate the duty of escort to her companion Mrs. Early, who would arrive at Southport that evening.

"How kind she is!" murmured Honor, her eyes filling. "Read her letter, Hugh. Her ladyship will send her companion for me, and she begs me to bring my maid. I cannot refuse such an invitation even from a stranger, and although I have no claims upon her. I will go."

"We will leave Southport on the early express. I will bring Mrs. Early here in a cab by the time you have finished your breakfast, and we will all go together directly to the station. Will this arrangement be agreeable to you, Honor?"

The young girl assented, and a little later Sir Hugh took his leave.

As he walked along the Manchester road and turned his face toward the Palace Hotel, he said to himself:

"I dared not tell Honor, but I am not yet hopeless of annulling this fatal marriage. I have one hope left, and I will cling to that until it fails me. Darrel Moer is proverbially fickle and changeable, and has loved a hundred women. He is thirty-eight years old. It is strange that he has never married. It is well known that Lord Waldemar cast off his only son because of a distasteful marriage, and that would render Darrel Moer secret and cautious in any case that might not be likely to suit the stern old Baron. Now there is a possibility that Moer has been married before, and that he dared not confess the fact to his uncle. He is a strangely reckless man at times, and might deem himself safe from prosecution for bigamy. Now suppose—simply suppose that he has a wife living? Then Honor is free as air—not married!"

He quickened his step, and his gray eyes burned with sudden fire.

"Of course," he continued, "this suspicion—I cannot even call it a suspicion—this possibility of the existence of a previous wife is only a possibility. The idea grew upon me out of that reference the lawyer made to some scandal in which Darrel Moer was concerned years ago, and which was hushed up. I'll give my attention to this matter, and if there is such a secret in Darrel Moer's life, I'll unearth it. And if there is not, then we can only possess our souls in patience."

CHAPTER XXII.

HONOR INSTALLED IN LONDON.

At an early hour upon the following morning, directly after Honor and her maid had eaten breakfast, a cab halted before the gate of Oak Cottage, and Sir Hugh Tregaron and Mrs. Early, Lady Thaxter's companion, alighted therefrom and approached the house. Lucky Banner met them at the door, and ushered them into Honor's parlor, where Honor awaited them, in a gray travelling costume, and wearing her little round gray hat and short vail.

Mrs. Early was a plump, rosy-faced, matronly woman of middle-age, and Honor cordially liked her at the first glance. It was evident that the liking was reciprocated. Sir Hugh performed the necessary form of introduction, and drew out his watch, saying:

"We must be on our way to the train. I will see you ladies in the cab that is waiting, and I will follow in another cab with the luggage. The second cab has, I see, already arrived."

Lucky caught up the dressing bag and shawl strap of her young mistress, and Sir Hugh escorted the ladies from the house. Honor halted a moment in the little hall-way, but saw nothing of Miss Brown, and so passed on, following Mrs. Early, and being in turn followed by Lucky.

Half-way down the walk, Honor paused and looked back, obeying an uncontrollable impulse.

She saw at Miss Brown's parlor window the spinster's sour face, pressed close against the glass, the wig all askew, and then she glanced at the windows of the room she had occupied, and raised her gaze to the room above. She beheld at the window a bearded face, which seemed somehow familiar.

"Who is that, Lucky?" she whispered. "Quick! In the room over ours."

Lucky glanced quickly, and gave a quick, frightened start.

"That! why, that's that villain Bing!" she gasped. "Oh, Miss Honor! He must have been staying in the same house with us! He must be the new lodger Miss Brown's maid was telling me about last night that is going to marry her mistress. That's the very beard I snatched off his face."

"We have not left this house too soon," said Honor. "Somehow the sight of Bing at that upper window impresses me with a fear of Mr. Moer deeper than I have hitherto felt. He must be indeed desperate. What can he hope to gain?"

She moved on just as the baffled villain dropped his blind, and muttered:

"The young lady has left the house. The game is played out as far as I can play it alone. I must have new directions from headquarters. Miss Brown loses her poor, sweet, dear invalid curate within an hour."

Mrs. Early, Honor, and the maid of the latter, were assisted into the cab and driven to the railway station. Sir Hugh superintended the removal of Honor's luggage and followed with it in the second cab. The entire party was soon after on the way to London.

Bing waited patiently a half hour or more, until Miss Brown, her basket on her arm, had gone forth to do her marketing, intent upon securing some delicate morsel for her lodger's dinner. When she was well out of sight, the faithless Bing took up his valise and departed, proceeding also to the railway station. By the time Miss Brown returned to Oak Cottage, Bing was seated in a second-class coach, his face denuded of his beard, and riding swiftly on his journey back to Yorkshire.

It was three o'clock when Sir Hugh Tregaron's party arrived in London. They found Lady Thaxter's carriage with liveried servants in waiting. Sir Hugh gave orders in regard to the transportation of the luggage, and having already assisted the ladies into the carriage, handed in Lucky, and followed himself.

The day was fine for the season and the place, and the drive to Park Lane was not unpleasant. The carriage halted before a handsome mansion, the door of which swung open as they ascended the steps. Mrs. Early conducted the guests to the drawing-room floor.

They had hardly reached the head of the wide flight of stairs, when a lady, simply dressed in dove-colored silk, came out of the drawing-room with a graceful step, and advanced to meet them. She seemed the impersonation of hospitality and welcome.

This was Lady Thaxter. She was elderly, and had been handsome in her youth. She was handsome still, and portly, with a fine and gracious presence. She was the widow of a cabinet minister, and was childless, but she gave to her nephew Sir Hugh Tregarón the devotion and tenderness of a mother.

"My dear Hugh!" she cried, extending her hand to him. "I am so glad to see you back again. Miss Glint, there is scarcely need of an introduction between us two. I should almost have known you anywhere from Hugh's descriptions of you. I am glad to have the opportunity of welcoming you in my own house. It is hardly necessary for me to add that I am Hugh's Aunt Julia." And she smiled, and took the girl's hand, and kissed her lips with a kindness that won Honor's heart.

Her warm reception was as pleasant as it was unexpected. Honor found herself welcomed by this stranger lady as if she were already Sir Hugh's wife, and she was made to feel that she had come home—that she was to be treated more as a beloved daughter of the house than as a visitor. Her splendid eyes beamed her love and gratitude to Lady Thaxter.

"You look tired, my dear," sad her ladyship. "Shall I show you at once to your room, that you may rest before dinner? I see Mrs. Early has already disappeared. Hugh, you know your old room. Come with me, Miss Glint."

Lady Thaxter conducted Honor, her maid following, to a handsome room over the drawing-room. It was daintily fitted up in the perfection of taste and luxury. A fire burned on the hearth. A low French bed stood in an alcove, and was half hidden by curtains of lace and silk. There was a bath closet adjoining the sitting-room, and also a small room for the occupation of Honor's maid.

Lucky found her way into the latter room at once, and closed the door. She had a share of delicacy more than is often found in persons of her class in life. Lady Thaxter gently compelled Honor to sit down in a low chair before the fire, and with her own hands removed the girl's wrappings.

"Hugh told me all that is necessary for me to know, in his long letter to me from Southport," said her ladyship, her jewelled hand straying over Honor's golden hair with a lingering, caressing touch. "I shall not let you go from me, dear, until this miserable business is settled, and you are Hugh's wife."

"Then you do not know," said Honor simply. "Sir Hugh has found that there is no escape for me, Lady Thaxter. The tie that binds me cannot be dissolved."

"We will have better counsel before we give up hope," said her ladyship. "And—and, dear, if it should be so, and you cannot be made free, I shall keep you with me always, perhaps. You must feel that you have found a home. Captain Glint must visit you here, when he returns to England. I am glad you keep up such a brave face, and such a brave spirit. Hope against hope, Honor. Hope till the last. You see how thoroughly I have adopted you, my dear, since I call you by your name. I hope you do not shrink from company," she added, with a sudden remembrance. "I would have preferred to have you all to myself for the present, dear, but I have a guest who arrived a day or two ago from the Continent, and who will claim a share of my attention. I am sure you will love her. She is the widow of a German Count, and is as lovely in disposition as she is beautiful in person. You will meet her at dinner, or in the drawing-room before. We dine at eight, and I shall come to your room for you at seven."

With another caress she withdrew, leaving her young guest to the enjoyment of a delicious sense of restfulness, such as she had not experienced since that night in which Darrel Moer had declared to her his love and urged her to marry him.

Passing along the hall, Lady Thaxter knocked lightly at the door of Sir Hugh Tregaron. The young Baronet gave her admittance.

"Oh, Hugh," cried his aunt, "what a sad pity it is that this young girl should have become entangled in such a net! She is the most splendidly beautiful creature I ever beheld. What a sensation she would make as your bride! I would give a fortune to be able to introduce her at Her Majesty's next drawing-room. Are you very sure that there is no release for her?"

"I shall not relinquish hope yet, Aunt Julia," said Sir Hugh, with quiet resoluteness. "She will have to be guarded very carefully here. Moer is an unscrupulous villain, and may attempt to frighten her into flight, or to injure her in some way. He sent his man to rob her of the certificate of her marriage yesterday, but happily that design was frustrated. I am almost sorry that you are in town."

"I would go into the country, if it were not for my guest," said her ladyship. "I owe the Countess every civility, and she desires to see something of English society. I wish I might do more for you and this lovely girl, Hugh, than merely to offer her an asylum from her persecutors. Her face confirms all your eulogies of her. I see that Captain Glint takes high rank among the officers of the merchant marine. The Glints are a fine old family, as I saw by referring to my hand-book upon the County Families. And though you could have looked higher, Hugh, and married a lady of rank, I should be well satisfied with your present choice, if you were free to marry her. This ugly fact of her marriage—a mere form—a brief ceremony—separates you two as effectually as if she were in truth Darrel Moer's wife."

"I realize all that, Aunt Julia," said Sir Hugh, the shadow deepening upon his brow. "I wish you could have had Honor all to yourself for a few weeks. She has a heavy burden to bear, and all the light gossip of society will be loathsome to her. Then, as she has not spirits to go into society, you will be obliged to leave her alone more than will be good to her. You have not told me who is your guest."

"It is the Countess of Rothsmere, Hugh, of whom I have told you so much, you remember. We had letters of introduction to her when we went upon the Continent last year—Mrs. Early and I—and she invited us to spend a month at her grand chateau in Hungary, and invited some very fine people to meet me. She lives like a princess, with a host of retainers, in the midst of a great forest. We hunted and rode for miles over her grounds. We had private theatricals, in the evening, and she had a concert troupe down from Pesth to play for us, and she gave a grand ball, all in my honor. In truth, Hugh, she treated me as if I had been a sister queen come to visit her. I invited her to England, and I beg you to remain my guest during her stay with me. We shall need a cavalier to attend upon us."

"Does the Countess speak English?"

"Why, yes, Hugh, and with the most perfect accent. I believe her father or her mother was English. And besides, you know, the Russians, and some other peoples as well, study all the modern languages as their own, and are born linguists. Lady Rothsmere speaks French like a French woman, and German like a German woman. And as to Hungarian, she's of course at home in that."

"I should like to see her," said Sir Hugh. "She may be a pleasant companion for Honor. Is she very old?"

"No, she's comparatively young. I should call her about thirty, Hugh—a little too old for you if your heart were not already engaged. Her husband was a very prominent man in Germany, and very eccentric. He was old enough to be her father, and only died some two years since. Come down to the drawing-room and be introduced to her at about seven. She is dressing for a drive in the Park at this moment, and I am to accompany her. Good-bye, Hugh, till seven."

She departed from her nephew's presence with a smile, but the smile faded as she went to her own apartments to prepare herself for her drive.

"This thing is just killing Hugh," she said to herself. "He looks years older and graver than when I saw him last. He is just the man to sacrifice himself to this beautiful girl, or rather to his hopeless love for her. I own she is the loveliest creature I ever beheld. I should be proud to introduce her as my niece. And she comes of a good and very old family, not noble, and not exactly what I should have expected Hugh to choose his bride from; yet what does it matter whether she is titled or not?—rich or not? She is good, respectable, intelligent, well-bred, and has the airs and manner of a duchess—or such as should distinguish a duchess. And she has no stock of under-bred relatives to make one blush. I hope Hugh can secure her freedom. But if he cannot," and Lady Thaxter's gentle lips were closed together firmly, "then, in justice to him and to her, I must find some way to separate them. Perhaps the Countess would take Honor back to Hungary with her. Hugh's life shall not be made desolate because of his unhappy love. I will send poor, lovely Honor away, and he—yes, he shall be compelled by all the force of persuasion and loving entreaty to marry some other woman."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

—If you wish to pronounce an impartial judgment, never accept any favor.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, AUGUST 31, 1872.

WE always stop the LEDGER at the expiration of the year, or of the time for which it is paid, so that if you wish to continue it, it would be well to renew your subscriptions at least one week before the time expires.

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Honesty in Politics—What It Should Mean.

We hear it said, frequently, of a candidate, he is an honest man. This phrase seems to mean, with many people, simply that the person of whom it is used would not steal, or would not cheat in money matters.

Now honesty, when applied to a candidate for an exalted station, should comprehend much more than this. For instance, it is very little to say of a candidate for President of the United States, that he will never be a thief, or an embezzler, or a defrauder.

It is not at all likely that we shall ever have an official occupant of the White House of whom thus much cannot be said. But it is very easy for a man who refrains from putting a penny in his own pocket to injure the country to the extent of millions upon millions, by shaping the financial policy of the the Government, not with a single eye to the public interest, but in such a course as to benefit and enrich his political and personal friends and supporters, at the ultimate cost of the National Treasury.

A President should be honest, not only as regards his own pocket, but honest in his convictions, and honest in all his purposes. He should be a man of stubborn and unyielding nature in this respect. GEORGE WASHINGTON was an honest man. ANDREW JACKSON was an honest man. They were honest because it was their nature to be honest—honest from instinct, from self-respect, from conscience; honest because they couldn't help being honest. We want men of their kind of honesty—comprehensive and downright integrity.

◆

The Death of a Dishonest Man.

It is over. He was buried to-day. He did not live to be old, and yet his life was not a short one. He did a great deal of business, and was widely known. The flags hung at half-mast for him, because he had been prominent, and his name had been a good deal before the public.

Yet nobody respected him. He was not honest; and that was the fatal drawback which always kept him under. He was shrewd enough, and smart enough; but yet he never had any solid, substantial prosperity. And the sole reason was because he had no inborn, abiding integrity.

Providence so orders things that dishonesty thwarts the most cunningly devised schemes for making money. Were it not so, thieves would become rich; but thieves never do become rich, in the true sense of the word. Their gains are uncertain, and their lives are thriftless as well as unhappy.

Apart from all reference to a future state of existence, there is no better platform for this world, no better basis to do business upon, than that of the ten commandments.

◆

"It Was All for Love."

Those five little monosyllables are reported to be all that a man, who was arraigned the other morning for shooting a young girl, could say in response to the Justice's questions.

"What have you to say in respect to the offence for which you stand charged?" said the Justice, in closing the examination.

"It was all for love!" repeated the prisoner.

It is probable that the unfortunate man thinks that he did really love the girl whom he shot and mortally wounded; but other people will have no difficulty in perceiving that what he calls love is simply the essence of selfishness.

"*Love worketh no ill to his neighbor*," is the doctrine of Holy Writ. And whatever does work ill to any one cannot truly be called by the sacred name of love.

◆

What Beer is Made of—A New Temperance Lecture.

CHARLES MARLOW was hanged at Mayville, Chatauqua county, in this State, on the 15th of August, for the murder of WILLIAM BACHMANN.

The convict was a brewer. BACHMANN was supposed to have a large amount of money in his possession, and to obtain this was the object of the crime.

Before his execution, MARLOW made a confession, which begins as follows:

> "I took him," meaning Bachmann, "down in the best beer vault; I was about drawing beer off from a large hogshead; my beer was in a bad condition, and I had to use medicine in order to bring it to life again. Among my three boxes I had one box of strychnine—"

Now what did MARLOW have a *box of strychnine* on his premises—in his brewery—for? Of course he had it to put in his beer. And this is what people drink who drink beer.

◆

—*The Gazette*, published at Middleburgh, Schoharie county, N. Y., and edited by A. S. Foote, Esq., says:

> The best of all the weeklies is *The New York Ledger*. Mr. Bonner believes in concentrating all his efforts on *one* publication, and making that *the* best of all. *The Ledger* has the best corps of writers in the world, and its literature stands at the head. *The Ledger* we cannot do without, and Mrs. F. says, "Give me *The Ledger* in preference to *all* other miscellaneous reading."

Lunatic Asylums—Personal Liberty.

Considerable public discussion has recently been indulged in, concerning the facility with which persons of sound mind, but alleged to be insane, can be shut up in lunatic asylums and kept there despite all their efforts to get free. As a proof that these charges are groundless, the managers of a Lunatic Asylum in this city state:

> "Before a patient can enter the Asylum, it is necessary to obtain a lunacy warrant from a Justice of the Peace or a Police Magistrate of New York city, which can only be issued upon the evidence of two physicians."

This, then, is the only barrier between any man in New York city and a Lunatic Asylum! Let any two physicians certify to a man's insanity, and a magistrate will issue a "lunacy warrant," and the victim will be locked up with madmen and kept from all communication with anybody except those who procured his incarceration.

When one remembers that there are physicians in New York who are among the basest villains of the age, and that the warrants issued by magistrates are usually filled up by underlings and signed by the Justice as a matter of course, it is frightful to think what abuses may be perpetrated in this matter under the solemn forms of law.

A radical change is needed in this whole business. No man should be sent to a Lunatic Asylum on any private process whatever. The application for a commitment should be made in open court, after reasonable notice to all the relatives on both sides, and also to the counsel of the alleged lunatic. And if he has no counsel, then the court should assign him one, as in the case of criminals.

The personal liberty of the citizen, especially of one who is not even accused of crime, cannot be too carefully guarded.

◆

A Judge Fined by Himself for Drunkenness.

There is a Justice of the Peace in Otsego County, in this State, who is held in such exaggerated esteem by his fellow-citizens, that they claim that his equal for honesty, integrity and judicial decorum cannot be found anywhere in the Union.

And yet this estimable man got drunk. Politics and whiskey were his bane for one whole afternoon and evening.

With the dawn of morning and sober reason, came shame and remorse. He had sullied his good name. He had set a pernicious example. His friends could no longer brag on his decorum.

Happily the Otsego Justice was equal to the rehabilitation of his social and judicial status. He went to his court room, solemnly opened court at the usual hour, and called his own name as defendant in a case in which "the people" charged him with committing an offence against the law.

The stern old Justice then entered upon the trial of himself, in which he acted as judge, prisoner and witness. The trial was signalized by its solemnity and impartiality. The prisoner was found guilty, and ordered "to stand upon his feet and receive the sentence of the law." The sentence of the law was that he should pay ten dollars fine and the costs of the prosecution. The court was then adjourned, and the judge hunted up the poormaster of the town, paid him the ten-dollar fine, settled the costs with himself, and was more believed in than ever by his admiring fellow-citizens.

◆

Reading Dream Books.

"What are you reading?" was asked of a young girl, with a small volume in her hand.

"I am reading a dream book," she blushingly answered.

And are not all of us, young, middle-aged and old, constantly reading dream books? We begin in childhood—oh, what volumes of dream books we read then!—and we continue to read them diligently through life.

Dreaming, dreaming, we are always fondly dreaming of that which we hope will be, but much of which, alas! will never come to pass. Yet dreaming is, in itself, pleasant. It is the very next thing to reality. It is, indeed, the source of great happiness.

And then, again, if the unreal future comes to us in our waking dreams, so does the real past come to us in our sleeping dreams.

"The loved, the lost, the beautiful, the dead," rise from their graves, clothed, not in the cerements of the tomb, but in all the freshness and radiant beauty of life, and reappear to us as we once knew them. Again we clasp their hands, again we feel burning kisses, again we hear their sweet voices and their precious words; and even if it is all a dream, it is much, in this world of limited and broken joys.

Read on thy dream book, young girl, and long may it be before the dreams of the past shall be more numerous and dearer than all the dreams of the future.

◆

Starved to Death.

"Died from exhaustion through want of good food and proper nourishment," was the verdict of a coroner's jury, at an inquest recently held in Wandsworth, England. The deceased was a farm laborer, named JAMES SEWINGTON. He was honest, sober and industrious. In good weather he sometimes earned eighteen shillings—about $4.50—a week; but in rainy weather his wages were much less, and as a consequence, his rent got in arrear, and his wife and family were almost without food. Anxious to get out of debt, and to support those who were dependent upon him, the unfortunate man deprived *himself*—hero as he was—of the food necessary to sustain life, and at last actually died from starvation.

It is stated that this man was but one of a class which numbers tens of thousands in England, who, with their families, constantly hover on the verge of starvation, no matter how faithfully they may work to the full extent which their opportunities offer. If this be so, it is certainly a most deplorable state of things.

◆

One View of a Thunderbolt.

The Methodist Church at Garrison's Station, on the Hudson River Railroad, was struck by lightning a few days ago. The *Poughkeepsie Press* says:

> "Owing to the bitter feud which exists in the church society, it is the prevailing impression that the unfortunate occurrence was a special fulmination of God, for 'every house that is divided against itself shall not stand.' Not long since a ponderous window which is immediately in the rear of and overlooking the pulpit, (although a new church,) fell in upon the elevation where the minister stands while preaching, and had there been services at that period, the clergyman would have been instantly killed."

MINISTERS' AMUSEMENTS.

BY HENRY WARD BEECHER.

> "HONESDALE, Wayne Co., Penn., April 12, 1872.
>
> "Would you be kind enough to give us a piece as soon as convenient in regard to *ministerial amusements?* The time is coming now for outdoor amusements, and our minister has been working hard and closely confined to his study all the long winter. Almost everybody here plays 'Croquet;' yet old sister ——, who, by the way, *backbites* her neighbors from year to year, thinks our minister is awful bad because he plays croquet. Do tells us what kind of amusement our minister *can* have, which will satisfy old sister —— and such of our good people who pray so loud, and which will give him the exercise he needs? He is, most all the time he has out of the study, visiting his people, yet many of us, and so does he, feel that he needs some little out-door amusement. Please let us hear from you soon, through the *Ledger*. M. J. G."

There was once a reason why Christian ministers should be treated as a class by themselves. When the Church is united to the State, ministers of the Gospel constitute a distinct class, separate from other citizens, having certain privileges and immunities not belonging to all. Men naturally held them to their class bonds. They had no right to have prerogatives in their class, and then be exempt from the duties or deprivations that went with such privileges.

But happily, in America, there are no privileged classes. The law regards all citizens as on one plane. No clergyman has a right to take on airs, as if superior to other men. In the eye of the law he is a simple citizen, just as if he had been a farmer, a carpenter, a cooper, a doctor, or a lawyer. His profession confers upon him, in law, no privileges, and it takes away from him no rights. He is simply and only a Christian gentleman.

Whatever it is right for a Christian gentleman of his age and standing in society to do, it is right for a minister to do. It is a very bad policy for society itself to expect ministers to be different from other citizens. It would be wise to encourage ministers to lay aside all professional manners, and live among men just as any other well-behaved moral citizen would live. The time has gone by when a minister will increase his influence by a starched manner, by a super-sober face, by clothes and gait which will enable people to recognize him as a minister as far off as a Jew could tell a leper.

If a man have good sense—and if he have not, what is he in the pulpit for? *that* ought to be the very tribunal of common-sense—he will easily adapt himself to the prejudices of the people, humoring them until he have time to correct them. He may, if he choose, yield up some social rights, because he can in the end do better without them, than to hold them in a perpetual altercation. Men are not always to "stick up for their rights," for rights, like money, are often of more profit by spending judiciously.

But, on the other hand, it is a minister's duty to produce the impression that he is a royal good fellow. He ought to be every inch a *man!* Frank, straightforward, truthful, honest—in short, MANLY. Good health, good spirits, sympathy with the young, with all innocent enjoyments, are qualifications never to be overlooked. The Master commanded his disciples to be so attractive and admirable in their disposition and bearing, that men would be drawn to them. This test would go hard with those absurdly solemn ministers that scare all the children, and make the young people dread to meet them.

Now, as to the critical question in the extract at the head of this article, we are free to say that croquet is one of the most charming of out-of-door games, and the man who invented it, if alive, ought to be honored with annual gifts, and if dead, his name ought to be cut in gold and put in Westminster Abbey, among the benefactors of the race. A minister, like any other man, may say that this fascinating sport has no charms for him. But to decline it on moral grounds, as something too worldly for a minister, ought to send a man to Coventry.

A creature who does not play croquet, for fear he will "lose his influence," may be sure that he has no influence which he would not be all the better *for* losing.

As to censorious criticisms, what harm do they do? Nettles sting no one who does not handle them.

◆

"TRUST ON, TRUST EVER."

The saddest thing in life, after those sorrows caused by death, is the miserable doubt of each other which so many human beings entertain. There seems to be no such thing as trust in the world, after you have talked to some men. Even an undeniably good action is nothing to them; they see an ulterior motive in it, or, if they cannot see it, boldly declare that there "must be one."

There is nothing so weak in the eyes of these people as confidence. They laugh at one who trusts another's honesty, as at a poor dupe who deserves to suffer.

There are people in this world whose word is all-sufficient to me. I am as sure of them as of the sun. These doubters seem never to have found a being who would scruple to take advantage of them. With them the world is a world of thieves and liars. They may be courteous in their manners; they may entertain and be entertained pleasantly; but suspicion dwells forever in their bosoms, and Faith is a goddess who has never given them her hand.

Did you ever hear one of these people say, "Every man has his price?" He means it, for he has his own. He who trusts no one, is not to be trusted. And so let his friends and his partners watch him. So, when he shakes his wise head, and doubts the existence of pure wives and good mothers, let us ask no record of his own life. It is not the exemplary husband who thus judges those whom he should protect by his respectful word and thought.

"I don't know any man I'd trust." "I don't know any woman I'd trust." Say either of those things, and you write your own heart's secrets down for the comprehension of any sensible person. For one who has a spark of virtue can understand that in others' breasts it may be stronger and more glowing than in his own. Only the utterly blind from birth can fail to comprehend what light is.

M. K. D.

◆

A New Mode of Death.

Some of our Western exchanges discuss what they call "a new mode of death" that has been developed by the use of the vast grain elevators which have come into vogue in that section. It seems that the suction of those prodigious engines so far exceeds the expectations of those who manage them, that frightful casualties not unfrequently occur. The suction, even while it does not seem to be very great, is, in fact, irresistible. Only a short time since, as the corn was running out of a bin in a warehouse at La Salle, Ill., into a car, the son of the warehouseman, thirteen years old, jumped into the grain, supposing there was no danger. But the swirl of the vortex was not only too strong for him, but also for his father, who, seeing the boy's danger, jumped to his rescue. Both father and son were drawn by the irresistible suction of the elevator into the spout with the corn, and both were smothered to death.

◆

—The loss of friends is a wholesome grief, and the tears of sympathy are like balm to the sufferer; but the loss of property is a wound that festers.

GIRLS! PASS ALONG!

(*Passez, jeunes filles.*)

PARAPHRASED FROM BERANGER.

BY JOHN G. SAXE.

I.

Bless me! what a rosy row
Of girls at me their glances throw,
As they gaily come and go,
The light coquettish throng!
Can't the darlings hear me say,
"I have had my youthful day;
Now, I put such things away?"
Girls! pass along!

II.

Ah, my Zöe! pray desist!
Sooth, I care not to be kissed;
Ask your *mother* if I list
To Cupid's siren song?
She—but that is *entre nous*—
Knows what Love and I can do;
Her advice you 'd best pursue—
Girls! pass along!

III.

Laura! you would hardly guess
How your grandam used to press
Lips of mine—well—I confess—
We didn't think it wrong;
Look!—she 's coming! Tempt me not
In gay saloon or shady grot;
A jealous eye the dame has got;
Girls! pass along!

IV.

You smiling too! you naughty Rose!
I wonder now if you suppose
I 'm not aware what sort of beaux
Around your beauty throng?
I know the husband-hunting crew,
And all the pretty tricks they do;
I 'm old—but much too young for you!
Girls! pass along!

V.

Away—away!—you madcaps!—fly!—
Your roguish arts why *will* you try
To bind a graybeard—such as I—
With Cupid's slender thong?
Yet, like a powder magazine,
My heart from flying sparks I screen,
The sparks that shoot from wanton e'en;—
Girls! pass along!

◆

DE WITT CLINTON.

BY JAMES PARTON.

In going about this Manhattan Island of ours, and observing its dirty, shabby looking streets, its miles and miles of tenement houses swarming with human beings, its million inhabitants, surrounded by a wall of fever and ague twenty miles wide, its crammed horse-cars, consuming an hour and a half in going eight miles, adding cruelly to the burden and fatigue of every day to vast numbers of laborious men and women, its wide and rapid rivers unspanned as yet by a single bridge, and thinking too, that the situation of the city of New York is as magnificent as it is difficult, offering a *chance* for the grandest and most beautiful, the most convenient and salubrious city that ever existed, I often say to myself, Oh for ten years of such a City Government as New York had in the days of De Witt Clinton!

Not that De Witt Clinton was a faultless man. He was very far from faultless. There were defects in the constitution of his mind. He was sometimes haughty, obstinate and unreasonable. Ambitious he was always, and he attached an excessive importance to the visible rewards of public service, such as high office and posthumous fame. But there was something noble in his very faults. If he was ambitious, he sought distinction only by rendering great public service, and by identifying himself with great public works.

Coming upon the stage at a time when politics were inflamed and imbittered to a degree of which it is now difficult to form an idea, he shrunk from none of the consequences of political warfare. If you wish to know what manner of *young* man De Witt Clinton was, you have only to read the official report of the duel which he fought in 1802 with John Swartwout, at Weehawken. Clinton was then opposing Aaron Burr, and Swartwout accused him of being actuated in his opposition only by personal and selfish motives.

"He is a liar, a scoundrel, and a villain," exclaimed the hot-headed Clinton.

A challenge followed, and the duel was fought. I suppose that it was the most remarkable affair of the kind that ever occurred—out of Ireland. The first fire doing no harm to either antagonist, one of the seconds asked Swartwout:

"Are you satisfied, sir?"

"I am not," said he, with more bluntness than courtesy.

They fired a second time without effect.

"Are you satisfied, sir?" asked the second.

"No!" thundered Swartwout.

The men fired a third time without effect, when the same gentleman again politely asked Mr. Swartwout if he was satisfied.

"I am *not*," was the reply; "neither shall I be until that apology is made which I have demanded. Until then, we must proceed."

Swartwout's second then presented a paper containing the apology demanded for Clinton's signature, saying:

"We cannot spend our time in conversation. This paper must be signed, or proceed."

"I will not sign any paper on the subject," said Clinton, with firmness and dignity. "I have no animosity against Mr. Swartwout. I will willingly shake hands, and agree to meet on the score of former friendship."

The fourth fire then took place, when Clinton's ball struck his obstinate antagonist in the left leg below the knee.

"Are you satisfied, sir?" the wounded man was again asked.

Standing firmly at his post, he answered:

"It is useless to repeat the question. My determination is fixed, and I beg we may proceed."

While the surgeon was extracting the ball from the opposite side of Swartwout's leg, Clinton again declared that he had no animosity against Swartwout, that he was sorry for what had passed, and was willing to go forward, shake hands, and bury the circumstance in oblivion. Swartwout, however, standing erect at his place, insisted upon the written apology. A fifth time they fired, and Clinton's ball struck his antagonist in the same leg, a little below the former wound.

"Are you satisfied, sir?" asked the second.

"I am not, sir!" replied Swartwout; "proceed."

Clinton then left his station, threw down his pistol, and declared that he would fire no more.

Whereupon Swartwout, turning to his second, asked what he should do; to which the second replied:

"There is nothing further left for you *now*, but to have your wounds dressed."

So the combat ended, and the two parties returned in their barges to the city.

Such was Clinton at thirty-three, when he had already been a member of the Legislature, and was about to enter the Senate of the United States. He was brave to rashness, and ambitious beyond measure; but he lived up to the standard of his day, and acquitted himself of every trust with honor and distinction.

In those days the Mayor of New York was appointed by the Governor of the State. It was an office of such honor and emolument, that, in 1803, when George Clinton was Governor, De Witt Clinton resigned his seat in the United States Senate in order to take the place of Mayor which his uncle had offered him. From that time until his death in 1828—sometimes as Mayor, sometimes as Governor, sometimes as member of the Legislature, and always as citizen—he served his native State with vigor and ability. It was not he who originated the idea of the Erie Canal. That had been thought of before he was born, by General Washington and others. But to him more than to any other man was due its early completion. While he was still a young man, he had the clearest view of the capabilities both of the State and the city, and as early as 1810 he explored the route, and recorded his adventures in making his way through the wilderness of Western New York; and though President Madison declared the proposed canal too great an undertaking even for the resources of the General Government, De Witt Clinton persevered. He urged on the work both by his pen and by his political interest, until he had created a public opinion which the opponents of the work could no longer resist.

On the fourth of July, 1817, with his own hands he broke the ground for the beginning of the enterprise; and in October, 1825, he had the pleasure of traversing the whole length of the canal in a barge, going all the way from Lake Erie to New York harbor, saluted by every town and village with bells and cannon. It was a great triumph. Before he died, he saw the long line of flourishing towns and cities which line the canal, springing into existence. The success of the canal system was so striking as to give him an almost unequalled national position; and but for his sudden, premature death, in 1828, when he was but fifty-nine years of age, it is by no means unlikely that he would have succeeded Andrew Jackson in the Presidency. The General, who had been a stanch friend of his uncle, George Clinton, was also an admirer of De Witt Clinton, and would unquestionably have offered him a place in his cabinet.

De Witt Clinton was much more than a politician. He was a great promoter of the free-school system of the State, and an active member of almost all the charitable, literary and scientific societies of his day, to which he gave money, time and labor. The New York Historical Society, of which he was President for some years, was greatly indebted to him.

We are apt to think of De Witt Clinton as a grave, austere personage, and when he came before the public he usually left such an impression. He was a man of commanding stature and noble countenance, more dignified and impressive as a speaker than pleasing. But he was in reality very fond of a jest, and excelled in lively satirical composition. During one of his canal trips in 1820, he wrote a series of letters to a New York paper, signed Hibernicus, in one of which he has some remarks upon the Presidential election then impending, which may serve as a specimen of his lighter manner:

> "I have often asked some of the leading politicians of this country, what constituted the real points of discrimination between the Republicans and Federalists, and I never could get a satisfactory answer. An artful man will lay hold of *words* if he cannot of *things*, in order to promote his views. The Jansenists and the Jesuits, the Nominalists and the Realists, the Sub-lapsarians, and the Supra-lapsarians, were in polemics what the party controversies of this people are in politics. If you place an ass at an equal distance between two bundles of hay, will he not remain there to all eternity? was a question solemnly propounded and gravely debated by the schoolmen. The motive to eat both, some contended, being equal, it was impossible for the animal to come to a conclusion. He would therefore remain in a state of inaction, for ever and for ever. This problem, so puzzling to scholastic philosophers, would at once be decided by the ass, and the *experimentum crucis* would effectually silence every doubt. It is impossible for a man, however quietly disposed, to act the supposititious part of the scholastic ass, and remain neutral between the parties, or bundles of hay. He must in truth participate in one or in both, and as it respects any radical difference of principle, it is very immaterial which he selects. There are some pendulum politicians who are continually oscillating between parties, and these men, in endeavoring to expiate their former oppugnation by fiery zeal, are mere firebrands in society. In order to cover their turpitude, they assume high-sounding names, and are in verity political partisans, laying claim to be high-minded, and like Jupiter on Olympus, elevated above the atmosphere of common beings."

Some readers may think, perhaps, that these observations are as applicable to the state of things in 1872, as they were to the politics of 1820.

◆

FASHIONABLE WORSHIP AT NEWPORT.

"Bridal of earth and sky."

Only these words fitly express that glorious Sunday morning. Being on the invalid list, and unable to join the worshippers inside the church, I sat in my open carriage near by, in the shade of a large tree, to catch, perchance, a floating bit of the chant, or of the service, that I might carry away with me for my comfort and healing. The birds were singing over my head, and through the thick branches of the trees I caught glimpses of the blue sky. Lovely flowers shook fragrance from their silver bells, and every grass blade was luminous with diamond drops. But, stay! Are these worshippers?

"*Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God of Sabaoth!*"

Mark the artistic curve with which that liveried carriage sweeps up to the crossing. See that paniered lady alight, oiling and spreading every feather of her gay plumage even up to the church porch. Following her steps is a boy of five, with the face of a cherub, in a miniature yachting dress, combining papa's colors. Every golden curl is artfully laid over his little scarlet collar, as passing by mamma, he bows his unconscious little head at her side.

"*Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God of Sabaoth.*"

Mamma too has bowed her head till only her panier is visible to the congregation as she kneels upon her velvet cushion. And now two young ladies, having waited till the last possible minute, to show off, stand together in the church porch, so lovely with the fresh coloring of youth, that flowers and gems seem to pale beside them, as they adjust, for each other, the last refractory ribbon loop.

Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God of Sabaoth!

They, too, pass in with bowed heads, and are lost among the gay worshippers. Stay! Have those coachmen outside any souls? They draw aside under the shade of the trees, compare horses and masters and wine, and joke with the young men who still loiter, unwilling to go in.

Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God of Sabaoth!

Oh, let us away where it *is* holy! away with God and Nature! away with the birds and unspoiled little children! away with the blue sky and the grand march of the ocean! away with God and the silence of our own souls!

For Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God, and the whole earth is full of His glory!

FANNY FERN.

◆

Woodman, Spare that Tree—The Cause of Droughts.

The *Yorkville* (S. C.) *Enquirer*, referring to the various reasons assigned why droughts are more common now than formerly, says:

> The main reason, we conceive, however, to be, because the forests have been cut down. The effects of forests upon the atmosphere are twofold. They fill the air with dampness, and again this dampness, when it is condensed into clouds, is attracted by the forests. The roots of trees run deep into the ground and absorb the moisture that is contained in it at a considerable depth below the surface. This moisture, much of it at least, is evaporated by the leaves, and thus the air is loaded with water. The amount of water that is drawn up from the stratas of the earth lower down than the roots of ordinary cultivated plants penetrate, is enormous. This water, if not drawn up by the roots of trees, would gradually make its way into creeks and rivers, and ultimately into the ocean.
>
> Cutting down the forests has two other effects, both of which result in decreasing the amount of rain. Dry and parching winds are unimpeded in their progress, and the result is that they carry off the moisture which is in the atmosphere. Another result is, that small streams of water have in many instances been entirely annihilated, except during the winter months. This has decreased the volume of water in the creeks and rivers, and consequently decreased the attractive force for the clouds and the amount of water evaporated from the surface of the earth in our particular section.

◆

—Prudence is a quality incompatible with vice, and can never be effectively enlisted in its cause.

THE STORY OF A ROSE.

BY ETHEL LYNN.

The happiest Rose in the garden round,
With a heart of gold in its crimson fold,
All hidden close till my king is crowned.

In the dewy shade of the hedgerow gay
I have waited long, till the summer song,
Droning, has silenced the chirp of May.

O the merry earth! It is good and fair,
With its nodding trees, with its wooing breeze,
And the broad bright sun shining everywhere.

* * * * * * *

Soft darkness, then daylight, then dew-sweet gloom,
As I come to rest on a woman's breast,
Slow rocked, like a censer of rare perfume.

Hark! I hear her whisper her lover's name,
As she lifts me now to the low white brow,
So to cool its flush, born of pretty shame.

Low a tiny cloud on the hill-top lies,
While the evening star quivers faint and far,
And the wreathing mists of the valley rise.

* * * * * * * *

Little blue-bells ring! I have found my king,
And his starry eyes open Paradise
As he holds me close, softly murmuring.

For he claimed me out of the maiden's clasp,
With a loving word that the night wind heard,
And he holds me safe in his royal grasp.

So the wind may sigh through the bending pine,
I shall fear no blast while he holds me fast,
And I see his eyes through the darkness shine.

* * * * * * * *

Dying, forgotten? And is this then all?
Comes the end like this? Not a single kiss
Ere his careless fingers had let me fall?

And the girl so fair—did he love her then?
Is she mourning too? Was he twice untrue?
And is this the manner of kingly men?

Even so; the gold at my heart grows dim,
And its crimson fold on the ground lies cold.
What matters the breath of a Rose to him?

◆

THE BLACK DOCTOR;

OR, THE

Prophecy of the Voodoo King.

AN HISTORICAL TALE OF THE SPANISH RULE IN LOUISIANA.

By **WILLIAM HENRY PECK**,
Professor of History in the University of the State of Louisiana.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE TENANT OF THE CHEST.

As Perez sprang to his feet on hearing the strange and horrible sound in the chest, it was with great difficulty that he refrained from blurting out, in his true voice, his customary expletive; and as it was, he muttered under his tongue:

"Diablos! This is sorcery!"

Juan, as he threw himself from the room out of the window, preferring—if he thought anything in that moment of supreme terror—to fall to the roof below and risk the breaking of his neck, to beholding the demons and the spectre of the dead Voodoo king, had been impeded in his escape by an iron hook in the window sill. His belt, a stout and seasoned strap of leather, had caught on this hook as he shot himself across the sill, and he now hung there—all his body out of the room, his face outward, as the hook held his belt behind, and his weight drawing the belt up between his shoulders.

He then had not the slightest doubt that one or more of the imagined demons of the chest had him, hard and fast, and swooned from sheer dismay.

It was well for the peace of the inn that the old fellow swooned, and hung there as if dead, or else his yells of horror and for mercy would have aroused a thousand ears.

As just stated, a deep silence followed in the room immediately after the dreadful screeching in the chest.

"This is indeed strange," said the Senor to Ivan, and breaking this profound silence.

Ivan, a man far from childish superstition, could not say that he was not surprised; and the pallor of his thin features declared that he was even terrified.

The features of the Senor could not be seen, because of his beard; but the tremor of his voice and the restlessness of his glance betrayed his great agitation.

The pawnbroker would have fled from the spot, but he had not power to rise to his feet. He said, however, as if replying to the remark of the Senor, and in tones scarcely articulate from fear:

"Syphaxo was a very remarkable man. I saw him Voodoo that chest with his dying breath. Oh, there was a strange power in that African!"

"Raymundo does not fear him," said Perez, who by this time had regained his natural recklessness of courage; and advancing again to the haunted chest, he stooped and placed his ear to the lid.

Instantly he recoiled, muttering to himself:

"Diablos! Something is sobbing in the accursed chest!"

And instantly all heard distinctly the sound of sobs in the chest, and then a smothered scream.

"What said it?" cried the Senor, grasping the arm of Ivan.

"'Let me out,' it said. Holy Isaac!" cried the pawnbroker. "Don't do it! Don't let it out. It may be Sathanus."

Rappings and thumps inside the chest now began furiously.

"Open the chest," commanded the Senor, giving the key to Ivan.

"Oh," said Ivan, "this fellow is a Voodoo, and should not fear such things;" and as he spoke he gave the key to Perez.

"Puf!" muttered the latter, as he put the key into the lock. "Devil or no devil, I do not fear the ghost of a slave;" and with this unspoken defiance he turned the key, and threw back the lid.

"Diablos! Caramba!" mentally exclaimed Perez, starting back, as an impish form, black as ink and as naked and supple as a snake, sprang from the chest to the middle of the floor, rolled its dilated eyes swiftly around the room, and then crouched down in a heap.

"The devil undoubtedly!" gasped the appalled pawnbroker.

A yell from old Juan, who, coming out of his swoon, had looked over his shoulder into the room just in time to see the black and naked form leap from the chest—a yell, and another swoon.

"*Exorciso te—*" began the Senor, but he smiled the next instant, and the thin-faced Ivan laughed a short sharp laugh.

"Puf!" muttered Perez. "It is only a little nigger!"

And so it was; and the poor terrified little wretch, crouching on the floor like some affrighted animal, began to sob and wring his black hands.

"Ho!" said the Senor, ashamed of his recent terror. "What are you?"

"I's a lilly niggah boy," whined the late tenant of the chest. "My name Juba, an' I belong to Massa Blazo dat is de landlord of de house."

"And what were you doing in the chest? And how and when did you get into it?"

"Dis arternoon," began little Juba; and at this moment old Juan, recovering from his second swoon, twisted his head and body around so as to get both hands on the window sill, so that Juba saw him and recognized him, as the light of the candles fell squarely upon the old man's face.

"How d'ye, Uncle Juan? How d'ye? You know lilly Juba!" cried the little negro, moving toward one who had always been kind to him.

"Go way, dar!" cried old Juan. "Doan come a nigh me! Done skeered de ole man till he make fool ob hisself, an' got hitched here like hog on a hook in a butcher's shop.

"Well, boy," continued the Senor, "tell me all, and I will not harm you."

It seems that little Juba had been bathing, with other negro children, in a tank in the yard kept for that purpose; that some of his mates had stolen his clothes; that in hunting for them he came into the Senor's room, and seeing the chest open, had got in, pulled down the lid, gone to sleep, and been locked in by the Senor on his coming back at dusk.

No suspicion that the disguised Perez was not a dark mulatto and the slave of Ruy Gomaza had entered the minds of Ivan and the Senor.

The latter, after the departure of the boy, said to Perez:

"You have sworn an oath of utter fidelity to me, Raymundo, and been badly frightened at the end, no doubt?"

"Yes, master; and though the presence of the boy there was apparently an accident," replied Perez, in a solemn way, "I, a Voodoo priest, recognize the seeming accident as a sign from the dead Voodoo king that his spirit has heard my oath."

"How admirably the captain says that!" thought the pawnbroker.

"How learned your slave to use language so far superior in style and expression to that of other slaves, Senor Gomaza?"

"Oh, as to that, noble Senor, we have slaves in Cuba who are quite accomplished, and Raymundo was for six or eight years hired to a physician in the country."

"If the fellow can write, or even read," said Ivan to the Senor, in Russe, "do not buy him."

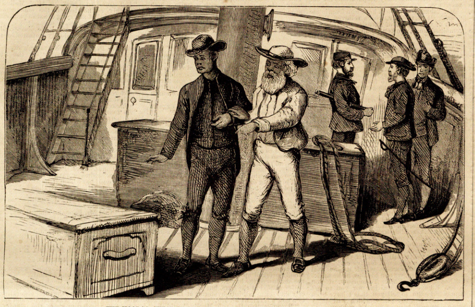
Perez, hearing this remark, crossed his hands behind him. His back was toward the pawnbroker, who understood this gesture.

It signified to Gomaza as plainly as if Perez had said aloud:

"Let me reply."

"Senor Gomaza," said Don Sebastian, in Spanish, "of course your slave, who speaks three languages so well, can write in one of them?"

But for the gesture made by Perez, as just stated, the pawnbroker would have declared that the pretended slave was an excellent scribe in all three. As it was, however, he answered:



THE VOODOO CHEST DISCOVERED UPON THE DECK OF THE RESCUING SHIP.

"Well, noble Senor, to be frank—why, Raymundo can easily prove whether he can write or not. Say, Raymundo; of course you learned how to write when you were in the service of Doctor Mictor?"

"No, master, I did not. In fact, the law of Cuba forbids a slave to be taught to write, without the consent of his master, and I never had time nor inclination—"

"But at least you can read in all, or in one of the languages you speak, Raymundo?" asked the Senor quickly. "If not, I do not wish to buy you."

"I am sorry for that, master," replied Perez, sighing as if about to burst with disappointment, "for I do not know one letter from another, whether printed or written. Syphaxo could both read and write."

"Dat he could! dat he could!" exclaimed old Juan, clapping his hands. "De great Syphaxo beat you in dat, any how!"

"Perhaps I may buy you, Raymundo," remarked the Senor. "But if I do, you must cease to call yourself Isadora Raymundo."

"Take any name you wish, master."

"Very well. Your price for him, Senor Gomaza?"

"Let us say, noble Senor," replied the pawnbroker, rubbing his hands, "let us say—ahem!—let us say— Oh, well, I have been offered by Doctor Mictor eight thousand reals for Raymundo."

The Senor spoke apart with Ivan for a moment, and then said to the pawnbroker:

"Can you keep him for a few days—say a week—letting him come to me once a day, for an hour or two at a time?"

"Oh, certainly, noble Senor," replied Gomaza, who saw that Perez had closed his left hand upon the wrist of his right.

This gesture meant, among the leading thieves of Havana:

"Agree to the proposal."

"Then I will buy the slave," continued the Senor.

"Thanks, my new master," exclaimed Perez, bowing low, and affecting great joy in his gestures.

"For the present, and till I see fit to give you another name," said the Senor to the pretended slave, "call yourself Joseph."

"I will call at your shop to-morrow, Senor Gomaza," continued Don Sebastian, "and pay you the eight thousand reals. Take Joseph—that is his name now—take Joseph with you. Here are a thousand reals to bind the contract. Give me your receipt for the amount."

He gave the pawnbroker a rouleau of gold, and after the latter had carefully counted the money over, he gave the Senor the desired receipt.

"And you may go about your business, Juan," said the Senor. "But twice a day come here to see me, or Ivan."

The pawnbroker bowed and departed, followed by the pretended slave and by old Juan.

One week after the above conversation, the small vessel purchased by Ivan sailed from Havana for New Orleans. On this vessel, besides the crew, were Don Sebastian, Ivan, the disguised Perez and old Juan Olio. The name of the vessel was *The Cid*.

The pawnbroker did not accompany the party. He remained in Havana, delighted at being rid of the formidable convict.

But the chest of the dead Voodoo king was with those who sailed on *The Cid*.

When two days had elapsed after the departure of *The Cid*, the pawnbroker received a note from one whom he did not know. A woman, or a person in the garb of a woman, entered his shop, placed a sealed letter on his counter, called his attention to it, and immediately went away.

The contents of the note were very brief, but the pawnbroker nearly swooned as he read.

CHAPTER XX.

THE VOODOO CHEST AT SEA.

The note read thus:

"You are preparing to leave Cuba. This time a letter—next my vengeance. RAYMUNDO."

"Raymundo!" muttered the pawnbroker, staring at the letter. "But it is the writing of Sancho Perez. He wrote it before he sailed, and left it with a spy. He suspected my purpose. I am watched. I am warned. He arrests my design with that name which was fatal to him. I must think no more of immediate flight from Cuba. May Sancho Perez perish on the sea!"

"Ho! a magnificent tempest!" said Gomaza to himself on the following day, as one of those tremendous storms peculiar to the tropics swept over the island. "*The Cid* must have sailed straight into it. Perhaps she and all on board are already at the bottom of the Gulf."

Ten days after, he suddenly met a man in the street, and recognized him as one of the crew of *The Cid*.

"Ho!" thought Gomaza, with fear at his heart. "*The Cid* has returned, and I am again to be imperilled and insulted by the hideous Perez."

He halted and spoke to the man.

"So you are back! You sailed on *The Cid*. I remember your face. Where is *The Cid*?"

"Foundered in the Gulf, Senor—three days out."

"Oh!" exclaimed the pawnbroker, his eyes sparkling with hope. "And those on board?"

"I and five of the crew escaped in a yawl. The others took to the long-boat. The two boats parted company almost instantly. We were picked up three days after by a French ship. The Senor, Don Sebastian, and his three servants—the white man and the two blacks—were in the long-boat. They may have escaped, but the chances are that all perished."

"Oh, I hope not! I hope not!" exclaimed Gomaza, rubbing his hands furiously in secret delight. "Oh—ahem!" he added, as a thought flashed through his mind. "Of course you saved nothing."

"Nothing—hardly our skins, Senor. *The Cid* parted amidships suddenly, and we barely had time to escape in the boats ere she went down."

"How unfortunate! Ahem! there was a large chest?"

"Chest? Yes, I remember. The Voodooed chest, that old bald-headed negro Juan called it," replied the sailor. "He used to rub and polish its lid and sides three times a day—he and the mulatto Joseph. The chest went down with the ship, of course."

The pawnbroker went away rejoicing.

But the story of the sailor was not wholly true. Don Sebastian and Ivan, and all the others, were rescued on the second day after the storm, by a vessel from San Domingo, bound for New Orleans.

Don Sebastian and Ivan had also saved all that they cared to save, their lives and their valuables; the latter contained in two small trunks, which Ivan placed in the long-boat ere he got into the boat himself.

Perez also saved a small trunk, in which he kept his clothing.

Old Juan saved nothing except himself and the clothes he wore.

The chest of the dead Voodoo king was in the cabin of *The Cid* when she went down. The Voodoo cane was in the chest.

On the third day after the storm, as those in the long-boat saw coming toward them the ship by which they were soon after rescued, Perez, still secure in his disguise, for the tint of his dye had not been washed off, said to old Juan, in his assumed voice:

"Juan, after all, that prophecy of the great Syphaxo about the chest can never come true."

"How know dat, Joseph?" snapped the old man.

"Because the chest went down with the ship."

"Ki! dat true, Joseph, dat true. But who know dat ches' gwine to stay down dar? Ship breakin' all to pieces when she went down. Don't believe she went cl'ar under de water. Wave broke all ober her decks when we seed her las', for true; but she no sink to de bottom, may be. No cargo on board. Fill wid water, smash to pieces by de waves, and den dat ches' float off."

In an hour or two after, all were safe on the deck of the *Isabella*, the name of the rescuing ship.

"Dar now!" roared old Juan, the moment he stood on the deck of the *Isabella*. "Dar now!" he repeated, grasping the arm of Perez, and pointing at something on the deck. "Dar dat ches'! Tole you so!"

The Voodoo chest was indeed there. It had been picked up a few hours before by some of the crew who had espied it floating on the waves. The captain of the *Isabella* had found among his keys one that fitted the lock; had examined its contents, and found nothing of any value to him.

Don Sebastian claimed the chest, and proved his right to it by describing the contents. As he had plenty of money, and withal seemed a man of consequence, the captain of the *Isabella* gave up to him the use of his cabin, and the chest was put there.

"Diablos!" thought Perez. "I have half a mind to destroy that old box of the devil at the first opportunity. If I could lock that old croaker up in it and pitch both overboard, I would. Puf! but why place any faith in the senseless jargon of an old impostor who was my slave?"

The spectre of the murdered Angelos Rio had not appeared to him since its last visit to him in the rear room of the pawnbroker's shop, and he was less inclined than ever to yield to superstitious fears.

As for that spectre, Perez believed its apparent presence was caused only by that deep remorse which he had ever felt gnawing at his soul from the hour of the murderous deed.

We may state here, that a fit of sudden rage had caused Perez to strike and then stab Angelos Rio, to whose assassination we have so frequently alluded; and that his suspicions, as we have heard him state them to Gomaza, were correct.

Angelos Rio had seen that beautiful young woman known to Perez only by the name of Angelique, at the cottage of the Russian fisherman, Paul Smolenski—of whom more hereafter.

Rio, having heard from Perez the desire of the two to sail in the *Doubloon* for Havana, and knowing the character of Sancho Perez, had pretended to warn Smolenski, and together they had concerted a plan by which Smolenski and Angelique—of whose history we have said nothing as yet—could escape from San Domingo by the aid of Angelos Rio.

Rio agreed to deceive Perez, but only with the secret intention to sell out the deception to Perez, in case the latter should bid high enough.

Rio did not know nor care why Smolenski and the young woman called Angelique desired to leave San Domingo before a certain date, which Smolenski had mentioned. The latter had asked Perez to permit him and Angelique to embark secretly, and by night, on the *Doubloon*—so secretly that no one in San Domingo should even suspect that they had sailed in that vessel.

"For certain reasons," Smolenski had said, in his conversation with Perez—that conversation of which we have seen the latter speak to the pawnbroker—"I wish all in San Domingo to believe that I and my niece are to live somewhere in the interior. I wish to go to Havana with Angelique, but I wish to do so secretly—for reasons which do not concern you—and to leave behind us the belief that I and Angelique are still on this island. Aid me, and I will pay you well."

Perez had agreed to do so, but had first to make a short voyage. But instead of keeping the affair in his own bosom, and ere he made that short voyage, he spoke of the matter to Angelos Rio, and asked him to keep his eyes on the movements of Smolenski, as he desired to discover something of that mystery which seemed to be at the bottom of the affair. Perez also told Rio, without intending to reveal so much, of the devouring passion he had conceived for the young woman.

With that proneness to enter upon singular speculations which had always characterized Angelos Rio, he instantly saw in this affair a chance to make money. He visited Smolenski as soon as Perez had sailed upon that short voyage, and after warning him of the designs of Perez, proposed that plan which was afterward carried out. Smolenski made the chest of which so much has been said, disguised himself as a negro cook, and, aided by Rio and the man Lopez Soares, succeeded in the deception planned against Perez.

Lopez Soares was one of three sailors who had agreed to join the crew of the *Doubloon* when she should return from the short voyage. He was not at first an agent or accomplice of Smolenski, but of Rio, who had engaged his services in the affair. After events forced Lopez Soares to become the friend of Smolenski and Angelique—as, for the present, we shall name the young woman whom old Juan saw rise from the chest.

While the chest with its concealed contents was on the *Doubloon*, and on the night of the 10th of April of 1783, Angelos Rio was slain by Sancho Perez. The murder came about in this manner: Smolenski had paid Rio twenty-five doubloons, and was to pay him twenty-five more on the successful termination of the deception. Rio, as intimated, had given his aid in the matter only to betray the deception to Perez, in case the latter should pay high enough. At first Rio thought of selling the secret to Perez for one hundred doubloons. Had Perez accepted the hint to bargain for the finding of Angelique, when Rio first approached the matter after they were at sea, Rio would have revealed the truth, if the other party, that is, the disguised Smolenski, had refused to pay as much for Rio's fidelity. As it was, Smolenski and Angelique were in the power of Rio as soon as they were aboard the *Doubloon*. Therefore, when Rio asked Perez if he would give a hundred doubloons to find Angelique, Rio asked the question purposely within the hearing of the concealed young woman. As the reader has learned, Perez replied that he had dismissed the affair from his mind. But as Rio expected, his question to Perez had terrified the concealed one. She informed Smolenski, who secretly held almost hourly communication with her, and he hastened to offer to pay Rio as much as a thousand doubloons for the continuance of his secret aid. This was exactly in accordance with the desires of the grasping Rio, who then demanded something in hand. Smolenski paid him a hundred doubloons, and promised the balance of the thousand.

Greatly pleased with the success of his speculation so far, and resolved to betray the secret in the end to Perez, if the latter should offer double what Smolenski had agreed to pay, Rio waited for a day or two, knowing well that Perez was brooding over the disappearance of Angelique, and that his powerful passions would prompt him at last to pay extravagantly for their gratification.

On the night of that 10th of April, near the hour of midnight, Perez, unable to sleep because of his mad love for Angelique, and his suspicions of Rio, went on deck. He found Rio at the helm, and every other man of the watch sound asleep. Angelos Rio was doomed to die on that night, for he would have perished by the dagger of Smolenski, had not Perez appeared on deck, and thereby prevented the design of the Russian; for Smolenski, the pretended negro cook Poncho, had drugged the grog of the whole crew, resolved no longer to trust the faith of Rio.

Smolenski's purpose was to kill Rio at some hour between midnight and morning; but at about midnight he saw Perez appear on deck. Neither Perez nor Rio had fallen under the influence of the drugged liquor prepared by Smolenski, so as to sleep.

Either these two had taken too little or too much of the liquor, and its effect had made them sleepless and irritable, instead of throwing them into a stupid repose.

Therefore Smolenski, concealed under a tarpaulin in the after part of the vessel, witnessed the following scene:

The night was one of brilliant moonlight, following a day that had been tempestuous. The breeze had become mild and steady, though the sea was rolling high.

Perez, after discovering that the watch were all asleep, muttered an oath and hurried to the man at the helm. He found Rio there.

"Diablos!" cried Perez. "How is it that you are here? Where is Gila, who should be at the helm?"

"I came on deck," replied Rio, who was an older man than his half-brother, "being unable to sleep. I found Gila nodding at the helm, and steering badly. The air refreshed me. I sent him below, and took his place."

"Why, every man of the watch forward is asleep—dead drunk, I believe."

"I did not go forward. I have not been here ten minutes," replied Rio.

"The rascals shall pay for their neglect to-morrow," said Perez. "They shall be flogged. I'll lay it on myself."

"You must not flog Gila, for I sent him below," replied Rio, who felt irritable.

"You forget that you are no longer my partner, nor joint captain with me of this craft, and in fact only a passenger," retorted Perez.

"And are you not sorry that some one else is not also a passenger?" retorted Rio.

"Diablos! You refer to Angelique?" said Perez, heated already on that subject.

"Yes; I mean Angelique. What of it?"

"You know where she is?"

"Perhaps I do. Perhaps I don't."

"Come, I do not want to quarrel, Rio. I do not wish to forget that you are my mother's son."

"Then go below, Perez, for I can take care of the ship."

"If I ever discover that you had any hand in concealing Angelique—and I believe you have, to make money out of me—I will beat your nose flat on your face," threatened Perez, picking up a hammer that chanced to be lying on the deck. "Look you, Angelos Rio; I was fool enough to trust with you my intentions concerning that young woman, and I believe you are trying to make money out of the matter, or that you fell in love with her yourself."

"Bah!" was the sole and very irritating reply of Rio.

"Come, I do not wish to quarrel with you," continued Perez. "Tell me where you have concealed her in San Domingo, and I will give you a hundred—yes, two hundred doubloons."

"If he tells," thought the disguised Smolenski under the tarpaulin, and peering at the two men, "I will have to kill both, or be killed by them."

"If I loved Angelique half as much as I think you love her," was the measured reply of Rio, "I would gladly give a thousand doubloons to find her."

"Diablos! Then it is a thousand doubloons you demand?" cried Perez, rapidly growing furious. "You wish to make a thousand doubloons out of my folly! Carajo!"

"Garlic-face to you, Perez. I am as white as you are. If it is a folly, cease to be a fool."

"I am getting into a rage."

"Keep cool then. You know I never have feared you."

Perez swore a terrible oath, and paced about for a few moments, muttering.

Then he came back to Rio, furious, grinding his teeth—those teeth he afterward lost in the mines of Almeida.

"I will give you a thousand doubloons, Rio. You are too shrewd for me. You have strange ways of making speculations. This is one of your good ones. You will make a thousand doubloons by defrauding the son of your mother. You are like her first husband—a greedy, faithless rascal. You are his son. What more should I or any one expect of the son of a thief—a cowardly thief?"

"That is enough, especially as my mother's second husband was a pirate," replied Rio sneeringly. "You are his son."

"Take care!"

"Oh, I am not afraid of Sancho Perez. A thousand doubloons! Why, if I loved the beautiful Angelique as much as you do—I have heard you muttering love speeches to her in your sleep—"

"Take care! Diablos! take care!"

"I would give half of my fortune to find her, Perez."

"Greedy devil!" exclaimed Perez; and with the swiftness and suddenness of lightning, he struck Rio on the head with the hammer.

"They are at it! Bravo!" muttered the hidden Smolenski.

Rio staggered under the blow, but did not fall, nor cry out.

He drew his dagger and flew at Perez. Perez met him with two blows: one on the arm that held the dagger, the other in the heart, with a stiletto.

The hilt guards of the stiletto struck the ribs of Rio. The blade of the stiletto snapped at the hilt, and remained in Rio's heart.

He threw up his arms spasmodically, shuddered, moaned, tried to strike Perez, fell, and was dead in an instant.

"Diablos! I have killed him!" muttered Perez. "He maddened me! My brain whirled! I did not mean to kill him. Well, he is dead, and the deed must be hidden. No one saw us, nor sees us now. Shall I leave him here on the deck, and go below? Diablos! I must first lash the helm. The breeze is steady, and will hold till morning as it is."

He lashed the helm, and let the vessel steer herself, which she did well under so steady a breeze.

Then he lifted the body and tossed it to the sea from the stern.

A great wave grasped it, and he saw it no more.

Little blood had stained the deck. That he swabbed up rapidly. The hammer he threw into the sea, and after that the hilt of his stiletto. Then he went to the bows of the vessel, to see if any one was awake there.

Smolenski glided from under the tarpaulin, and reached his bunk before Perez looked into it. When Perez did look into it, he saw a woolly head and a black shoulder.

"At least the negro cook hired by Rio did not see me," thought Perez, as he hurried on examining the bunks of all the crew.

The pretended "Poncho" was not the only one that had seen the murderous deed.

Through the holes of the chest, the concealed Angelique had seen a man—she did not then know who that man was—throw the body of another man into the sea.

As she witnessed that part of the tragedy, she shuddered, and said to herself:

"He has killed Rio, and thrown the corpse into the sea! A dreadful deed, but the wretch would have betrayed us to the ruffian Perez!"

She thought the man who threw the body into the sea was the man we call Smolenski.

She did not learn the truth until Smolenski, on his way to hide in his bunk, whispered at one of the holes of the chest.

"Princess, the deed is done for us by Sancho Perez. All is well. Keep up courage."

The reader is now informed that the young woman in the chest was no less a person than a princess. We leave her there for the present.

Having satisfied himself that not a soul, save himself, was awake on board, Perez retired to his cabin.

Before daylight a noise on deck gave him a chance to frame an excuse to go up there.

The wind had shifted, and the flapping of the sails, the creaking of spars and the pitching of the ship as she rolled in the trough of the sea, had aroused the second mate of the ship, and he was cursing, bawling, and calling all hands on deck.

Then there was an inquiry. Then the man Gila was aroused, and he spoke of how Captain Rio had taken his place at the helm, and sent him below.

The mate said he had found the helm lashed.

Then there was a vain search and inquiry for Angelos Rio, which Perez headed furiously.

And the matter ended with the general belief that Angelos Rio had lashed the helm for ease, and somehow fallen overboard.

Not one of the crew doubted this explanation of the mysterious disappearance of Rio, not even Lopez Soares, who knew and suspected nothing of the truth until Smolenski told him.

Soares was filled with terror. He did not dare to reveal to Perez that he had been the accomplice of Ric. As Perez had killed Rio, Soares was sure he would kill him if he, Perez, were to discover the secret of the chest.

Soares therefore was forced to become the faithful ally of Smolenski. Besides, Soares was the son of a Russian mother, and this fact created a kind of friendship between him and Smolenski; and the latter also had the command of money.

For these reasons Soares was as eager as Smolenski himself to deceive Perez; and when, after the chest had been safely carried to that deserted house of which we have heard old Juan speak, Perez ordered all his crew to make search for "Poncho," the cook hired by Rio, Soares conceived the plot of passing old Juan upon Perez as the missing "Poncho;" knowing well that Perez would detect that "Poncho" was Smolenski, were Perez to closely examine the pretended negro.

But Soares did not suspect that the sealed letter which he received in the Varlville mansion, when he and the sailor Boran carried the trunk of Mercita to that house, contained the forged order for the arrest of his captain. Therefore, when he heard that Sancho Perez was arrested upon the charge of having murdered Angelos Rio, and that the letter delivered by him to the Cardenas official had contained the order of arrest, he fled into the interior, and soon after escaped from the island on an English ship.

Afterward, in London, he learned from a Spanish newspaper, that he had been pronounced guilty of the murder of Angelos Rio, and that sentence of death had been passed against him.

Fearing recognition, were he ever to fall in with any Spanish ship, he abandoned the sea, and remained in London.

Our story now returns to New Orleans, to the Varlville mansion, to Mercita, as she enters the presence of Madame Varlville and "Adraste Scipian, the Voodoo Doctor."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

EFFIE'S ELOPEMENT.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"Trust him not, my daughter. I would sooner have you receive the attentions of the humblest man in our village than Albert Barton. I have no faith in his professions. Send him off, dear."

"Father, you are prejudiced against him. You don't know him as I do. He loves me truly. I know he does. Please don't bid me give him up. It would break my heart," sobbed Effie Ashmore.

"I *do* know him, and knew his father before him. They are alike. No woman who trusted George Barton was ever happy—not even the one he made his wife. Effie, I would not have trusted him in the days when my daughter would have been a dowerless bride. How much less *now!*"

"Oh, father, you wrong him; indeed you do."

"No, no, child. Your happiness is the dearest thing on earth to me. To secure this, I would save you from Albert Barton. Oh, why could you not return the affection of the one I would have given you to? feeling assured that he would have made you a *true* husband."

"Father, young hearts will wander, often, far from the judgment of older heads. Albert may have his faults, but I love him; and if you will not give me to him, please do not speak of any other winning my love. I *know* George Wilton is in every way worthy, and—"

"And you, my child, would have been happy in possessing the love of such a noble man, if Albert Barton had not crossed your path."

"Father, if you would know Albert better, you would find out how you wrong him. If he comes to you, will you listen to him and not treat him unkindly?"

"He is not coming, my child. He avoids me ever."

"Because he knows how you dislike him. May I send him? Please, father!" Her eyes were raised, tearful and pleading, to his.

"I will hear him, Effie, and deal justly and gentlemanly with him."

"Oh, thank you; dear, good father! Now I'm sure all will be right!" Effie exclaimed, smiles chasing away the tears, as she wound her arms about her father and pressed her lips to his.

"God bless and save her from evil," he murmured, as his gaze followed her retreating form.

An hour after, Effie was pleading with her lover.

"Go to father, Albert. Talk to him, and he will know then how good and true you are."

"No, no, my darling. It would be useless. He is prejudiced against me, and nothing I could say would be believed. To convince him of my sincerity, I must *act*, not *talk*. Let me go to him when I am your husband, Effie; then he will know I am not what he thought me."

A frightened look came into the girl's eyes as she raised them to her lover's, and asked:

"How can that be? I cannot be yours unless father consents—"

"Then, Effie, we must part. Your father will never yield. And as much as I love you, I cannot humble myself to beg for you from the man who, without any reason, not only dislikes, but speaks falsely of me. But I would gladly prove to him my worthiness. This I can do only in one way. And then, darling, as my wife's father, I will go to him and beg his forgiveness, if you wish it. Now you see, my love, our happiness rests alone with you. What will you do? Send me forth, crush all my hopes, and try to comfort yourself by ideas of duty, and end by marrying one your father may choose for you? Or will you go with me?"

On and on he talked, raising the poor girl's hopes, and exciting her fears, until, bewildered, and very miserable with the thought of parting, she promised all he wished—to elope with him the next night.

Endeavoring to quiet the fear which still shone forth from her eyes, Albert said:

"Only for a few hours, love, will you be absent. Your father will not have missed you when we shall be back again, claiming his blessing on our union. All will be well then. The future bright and happy. Trust me, darling, and cast all misgivings from your heart."

"Yes, Albert, I will trust you. But only think how dreadful it is for me to deceive him who has ever been so loving and kind!" Effie said, her eyes filling with tears.

"Nonsense, you sensitive little bird. You will laugh when you think of these misgivings ten days hence. Now listen, dear. To-morrow night I will have a carriage waiting at the foot of the garden. We will ride out to N—— in less than an hour, where my aunt will be waiting with friends to receive us. There we will be married, and return the next morning in time to breakfast with your father. Now smile, and bid me good-night. I must hasten off to make the necessary arrangements."

It was a very sickly little smile which Effie managed to force, as she bade him good-bye. Scarcely had he gone from her when it ended in a sob of real grief. She could not coax herself, notwithstanding all that Albert had said to the contrary, to think of her disregard of her father as anything but ungrateful, and undeserving of future happiness.

When he came in a few moments after, and bent over her with tender solicitude, she could not raise her eyes to meet his, fearful lest she should yield to that loving gaze and falter in her resolution. Feigning headache, she closed her eyes, but sleep came not to relieve her anxious heart, even for a brief hour. Many times, during that long, miserable night, she almost made up her mind to write and tell Albert she could not desert her father; but the thought of giving up her lover, "parting from him forever," as he had told her they should, unless she yielded to his wishes, almost broke her heart. And so, trying to console herself with the hope of a speedy return, and her father's blessing on her union, she arose early the next morning and went about making some little necessary preparations for her marriage.

Mr. Ashmore's business kept him from home nearly all of the day, which relieved Effie's heart of a great deal of uneasiness. If he had remained home, as often, coming twenty times or more before noon, to do something to please her, or claim some attention, never content unless near her, surely her heart would have faltered and failed completely.

It was quite dark when he returned. After supper he bade Effie "good-night," saying:

"I've had a trying day, and must rest now."

Everything seemed to facilitate her going.

"Why should she longer hesitate?" she thought.

An hour after, she stole out and sped quickly to the place where Albert was waiting to receive her.

"My own! my darling, brave little girl!" he exclaimed, as he started forward to receive her, and place her in the carriage.

"Oh, Albert, don't call me brave! I'm wicked; I feel it truly. And you—oh, perhaps after a while, you may—I cannot bear to speak it—you may love me less for this act," sobbed Effie.

"Hush! You shall not talk so, you silly little love! Have you not proved to me your love? which will make me love you *more*, if possible."

He drew her within his arms and tried to quiet her fears, but her heart was throbbing wildly, and her agitation seemed to increase as she was carried further from her home. At length Albert, wearied with his fruitless efforts to comfort her, said:

"Effie, this is childish nonsense. Calm yourself and listen to me."

She interrupted him by crying:

"Take me back to papa, Albert. Oh, please! Indeed my heart will break, if you do not! Take me back; papa will forgive us."

A contemptuous smile, which it was well she could not see, was on his lips, as he said:

"Not to-night, Effie. To-morrow, if you wish. I have been waiting for you to get somewhat calm, to tell you that I have been disappointed in my plans, which will delay our union until to-morrow. A few hours only lost. In the mean time you will remain with my aunt—"

"No, no—*no!* Take me home!" she cried, interrupting him. "It will kill papa! Oh, you promised I should return before I was missed! Oh, why did I leave home without his blessing!"

"Is is *too late* to repent it, Effie. You are mine now," he said, in a tone new to her ear—cold and cruel.

Poor child! she was too frightened to deny his false words. Never is it too late to repent a wrong action; never too late to retrieve the past, bitter and dark though it may be; never, while on earth, loving friends, with sympathy and help, will meet us; never, while in heaven our Father, who judges the heart alone, knowing its weakness, is waiting to receive us, to bid us be at peace.

At his first harsh words the poor child had withdrawn from his arms, and sank back weeping in the corner of the carriage.

"Effie, will you act rationally, and listen to me?" Albert asked, in a modified tone.

But she only answered:

"Take me home, please, Albert. Let me call to the man to turn his horses."

She sprang forward, and tapped sharply on the window back of the driver.

Immediately, before Albert had succeeded in drawing her back to the seat, the horses stopped; and an instant after, the driver opened the door, and said:

"The harness has given way, and it is so dark I can hardly manage to fix it alone. Will you please, sir, to lend me a helping hand?"

When Albert left the carriage, Effie's first impulse was to spring out and try to find her way back home. But an instant's reflection on the strange neighborhood, the darkness, and the late hour of the night, frightened her. Before she had time to think of any other plan she heard coming steps. The door was closed, and again they were in motion. She heard the cracking of the whip, and the urging of the horses to greater speed. Again she cried:

"Take me home to father. Oh, why did I leave him? Please, Albert, have pity!"

"Effie!"

The tone was loving and gentle. She put forth her hand and peered through the darkness, trying to see his face. Again came the loving tone:

"Effie!" and with it the glad cry of "Father!" and the answering:

"Yes, daughter, you are *safe* with father."

She was sobbing on his bosom. No words of chiding reached her ear—gently soothing her on the way until they reached home. She made no inquiry of Albert's whereabouts. She felt she had escaped from evil. That hour's drive had revealed to her his true nature. There was more *dread* than *love* in her heart then. All her father's words came back with full force, and she thanked Heaven for her deliverance.

"Sleep to-night, love, and to-morrow I will explain all that of course is mysterious now," her father said.

"Can you forgive and trust me again, father?" she whispered, when he met her, with more than usual affection, the next morning.

"I've nothing to forgive, love, for I permitted your going," he answered, as he drew her down beside him.

She looked strangely and inquiringly into his eyes.

"I will tell you about it, love. Yesterday morning John Brooks came to me, and began by saying:

"'Master, when I was a slave you always treated me kind—you and your father before you. Now I'm come to do you a good turn, may be; but, for the Lord's sake, make it all right for me somehow. For I know that Barton blood; they wouldn't mind shooting a darkey any time.'

"'What do you mean, John?' I asked, growing anxious at hearing Barton's name.

"'I an't certain myself, sir, what it means; but Mr. Albert's engaged my carriage to be at your garden gate to-night.'

"Thanking John, and promising to provide for his safety, I determined on my course. Having no one I felt so free to ask for assistance as George Wilton, I told him my plan. It needed but a little darkening of Wilton's face, John's coat and hat, to make him pass very well, in the dark, for the driver engaged. I was hid from sight. John we tied, to give him a good story to tell. After you were in the carriage, I mounted with George to the seat. We were about getting to the cross in the road where we intended to halt, and under pretext of the accident to the harness, get Albert Barton out, when your tapping on the window hastened us. So, my child, while that evil man was cutting some holes in a piece of old leather, to repair, as he supposed, the broken part, I stepped into the carriage. In an instant George sprang to his seat, put whip to the horses, and left Barton to find his way to N—— as best he could.

"I preferred to let you find him out as he truly is. I would otherwise have stopped you last night from leaving home. Effie, my child, tell your father: Do you still think of him as you did? Are you willing to trust your happiness to his keeping?"

"No, O no; never speak of him, father. I could never trust him again," Effie answered in a low tone, her face crimsoning with mortification.

"No, my child; never trust any man who counsels you to deceive those who have loved and watched over you all your life. There, there, do not cry. We will never mention this again. My little girl would have been wiser perhaps, had she not been motherless."

Albert Barton never came near Effie again. Shortly after, he left the village for the far West. George Wilton's continued devotion, and sterling traits of character, at last made a deep and favorable impression on Effie. Her father notices with joy that she makes a careful toilet every afternoon, and, sitting by the window, watches for the coming of somebody. The somebody always proves to be the same body. He is welcomed with a smile which promises the fulfillment of his dearest hopes.

MR. POPWING'S HENS.

BY AMY RANDOLPH.

"It's the most onaccountable thing!" said old Mr. Popwing, rubbing the humpy spot on the bridge of his nose, which little Dick Doane, the bound boy, believed was created specially to afford a cog for the resting-place of the big brass-bound spectacles he was accustomed to wear. "Three hens and a rooster—and the real Brahma breed, too. It's enough to provoke a saint!"

"So it is," said Mrs. Popwing, "and eggs at fifty-five cents a dozen, too! Melinda!"

"I'm here, mother," said a plump, apple-cheeked young lady of some two or three and twenty summers, who was re-trimming a distracting little velvet bonnet with a bunch of imitation apple blossoms and green velvet ribbon. "I say, mother, there isn't a bonnet in church so shabby as mine!"

"I can't help that," said Mrs. Popwing irritably. "Bonnets cost money."

"So do Brahma fowls," said Mr. Popwing, still brooding on his losses.

And then the household subsided into silence, till Mr. Popwing said:

"Melinda, I wish you'd go out yourself and lock them hens up to-night. I an't hardly myself with this plaguey rheumatiz, and Dick an't no more to be trusted than a musketeer."

"I be too," said Dick, under his breath.

"Yes, father, I'll go," said Melinda, rising. "Is that nine o'clock?"

And like a fair ghost she flitted across the door yard, the fast falling snow melting against her crimson cheeks, and laying cold touches on her plump hands, to the colony of hen-houses at the back of the barn yard. Mild Moolly pricked up her maroon velvet ears in the shadow of the hay-ricks, and the brindled heifer sniffed at the bars, but Melinda was no city damsel to fall into hysterics at the scent of a cow's fragrant breath.

"Be quiet, Brindle; soh, Moolly!" said she, pausing to pat the smooth sides of the colt, who stood in the sheltered shadow of the thatch. "My goodness gracious! what's that?"

"It's only me, Melindy," sighed Captain Noakes, who had risen up from the side of the fence like a portly ghost. "I've been a watching you all the evenin' through the window."

"And a very impertinent thing to do!" said Miss Melinda, firing up. "I wonder at you, Captain Noakes; I do indeed!"

"But, Melindy—" sighed the love-stricken swain.

"Do get along with you!" said Melinda severely. "And you old enough to be my father."

"Love don't go by years, Melindy," pleaded Capt. Noakes, who was a stout, middle-aged man, with a rubicund face that seemed to light up the surrounding darkness like a lantern. "And you hadn't ought to be hard with me, Melindy."

"Didn't father forbid you the premises, Mr. Noakes?" inexorably demanded Melinda.

"He didn't say nothin' about the barn yard, Melindy," groaned poor Mr. Noakes.

"It's all the same," said Melinda. "Please to go, as soon as possible, Mr. Noakes."

"But, Melindy—"

"I won't listen to another word of your nonsense, Mr. Noakes!" resolutely asserted Miss Popwing. "Father would be very angry."

"I don't care for all the fathers in creation!" stoutly declared the middle-aged lover.

"Go *away!*" cried Melinda, stamping her little calf-skin boot in the snow.

"Yes; but Melindy—"

The farm-house door opened here, a stream of coral light glimmered out across the white wilderness, and Dick's shrill voice was heard, calling out:

"Miss Me-*lin*-dy!"

Melinda sped round to the back door like a frightened lapwing. Mr. Noakes, not knowing exactly what else to do with himself, dodged into the hen-coop, where the nine remaining Brahma fowls set up an alarming flapping and croaking.

"Bother these feathered fowls," gasped Mr. Noakes, under his breath; "I'd like to wring every neck of 'em."

"O crikey!" ejaculated Dick, under his breath; "it's the feller as steals old Mr. Popwing's hens. I see him right at it, under the roosts."

And fired by a noble ambition to prove himself worthy of the Popwingian esteem, Dick skimmed out over the snow and banged the coop door to, securing it by an iron padlock on the outside, in which the key was hanging, festooned by a piece of scarlet alpaca braid.

"*Now* I've got you!" yelled Dick.

"Let me out! let me out!" shrieked Mr. Noakes, rattling at the bars of his cage, like a new specimen of grizzly bear or gorilla.

"I won't, ye murdering thief!" said Dick, feeling like the hero of a dime novel. "You'll be hanged for this, see if ye an't! Three hens and a rooster; any how, it's a transportable offence. Won't it be jolly?"

And Dick spun back to the house, his red hair blowing in the keen winter's blast, bolting into the keeping-room like a bullet from a Minie rifle.

"I've got him!" was all he had breath to ejaculate.

"Shut the door, ye little limb o' the evil one," sharply commanded Mr. Popwing.

"I've got him, sir, safe and sound," panted Dick.

"Be you crazy, Dick?" severely interrogated Mrs. Popwing. "Look at that there snow on your boots."

"Please come quick, sir," breathlessly asseverated Dick, "or he'll get out."

"Who'll get out? What on airth be ye talkin' about?" demanded Mr. Popwing.

"Three hens, sir, and a rooster! Leastways," Dick corrected himself, "him as stole 'em—a desput vagabone six foot high, with a iron crowbar under his arm! And I've padlocked him into the hen-house, and— Oh, come quick, sir, or he'll batter it down."

"Jonathan, remember your wife and family, and don't be rash," said Mrs. Popwing, casting herself hysterically upon her husband's arm. But Mr. Popwing remembered the three hens and the rooster instead, and was implacable.

"Reach me down that there gun," he said, signalling to Dick the rusty fire-arm that hung suspended on three hooks over the chimney-piece, and forgetting, in his righteous indignation, that it had not been loaded for three good years.

"Jonathan! Jonathan!" screamed his wife. But Mr. Popwing heard her not, as he sallied forth into the storm, with the rusty gun over his shoulder.

"He'll murder a fellow-creetur!" shrieked Mrs. Popwing, and she ran after him, forgetful of neuralgia and bronchitis; while Dick, the most thoughtful of the three, pounced on the lantern that stood behind the door, and stopping only long enough to light the guttered candle, sped in the footprints of his employers, with the pride of one who claimed the noble name of discoverer.

"I've caught you, have I?" triumphantly cried Mr. Popwing, as by the lantern's glimmer he saw a pair of eyes between the topmost bars of the hen-house door.

"Jonathan, don't do anything you'll be sorry for!" ejaculated Mrs. Popwing.

"It was *I* cotched him, sir," croaked Dick Doane's shrill treble.

And Melinda, rushing out of the back door, joined her voice to the general outcry.

"Pa, don't shoot! It's only that old goose Noakes."

"Three hens and a rooster!" hoarsely shouted Mr. Popwing. "I'll be even with the abductor yet. Hold up the lantern, Richard. How the snow gets into one's eyes! Why, Noakes, what are you doing here?"

"Nothing!" sullenly growled Mr. Noakes, driven desperate by the overweening power of circumstance.

"Did *you* steal my three hens and my rooster?" sternly interrogated Mr. Popwing.

"No, I didn't."

"Then what are you doing here?"

"I—I come to speak to Miss Melindy," sheepishly acknowledged the embarrassed lover, "and that are sprig o' Satan padlocked me in."

"An't he a thief?" cried the disappointed Dick, as his master slowly unfastened the door and threw it open.

And Mrs. Popwing, with woman's sweet inconsistency, turned sharply on the little bound boy and began to box his ears.

"It's all your doing," said Mrs. Popwing, as Mr. Noakes crept, in a discomfited manner, out of the Bastile of his temporary detention.

"Go!" said Mr. Popwing oratorically, as he shouldered the rusty gun. "Let this 'ere be your last attempt at—at—"

"Chicken stealing!" suggested Dick.

"At tomfoolery as you're old enough to know better than—" rather awkwardly finished Mr. Popwing. "Melindy, I hope you ha'n't encouraged this?"

"No, father, I haven't!" sobbed the truthful Melinda. "I told him to go about his business long ago."

Mr. Noakes crept silently away, a sadder and a wiser man. Mr. Popwing slowly locked the hen-house. Mrs. Popwing boxed little Dick's ears again—or rather the place where his ears would have been if he had not deftly dodged; and Melinda ran giggling back to the house.

"I declare," said she, "it's quite an adventure."

"But," said Mr. Popwing mournfully, "all this don't bring back my three hens and my rooster."

And it was an undeniable truth.

ONLY MAGGIE.

BY ANNA SHEILDS.

The two words, "only Maggie," were a sort of by-word in the Clements family, where the young lady rejoicing in the baptismal appellation of Margaret was considered somewhat inferior in all respects to the three elder sisters.

Miss Nora Clements was artistic, and spent her time in wandering about the country in search of the picturesque, or closeted in the room she called her studio, attempting to rival Titian or Claude Lorraine.

Miss Georgina Clements was musical, and her hours were passed in executing intricacies upon the grand piano in the drawing-room, or singing scales and exercises that rasped the throat of sympathizing hearers to listen to.

Miss Cordelia Clements was a beauty. Her time was passed in trying the effects of hair washes and cosmetics, studying the combinations of color for new dresses, or devising new fashions for dressing her luxuriant hair.

Maggie, the youngest, was simply a cheerful, good-tempered, industrious girl, who aimed at no special display of either beauty or talent, but was quite content to be handmaiden for the others. She ground Nora's colors, and stood patiently for hours as a model for some wonderful grouping. She kept Georgina's music in order, and could always tell exactly where to find any song or instrumental piece that was called for. She trimmed Cordelia's dresses and arranged her hair, and was the most sincere admirer the three Misses Clements possessed.

Howard, the only brother, and eldest of the family, was a physician, and the head of the household, the father and mother being dead. There was wealth enough to make a pleasant home when the separate incomes were combined, and Howard would have been most unwilling to see his sisters leave him for any but a home and husband of their own.

"We can all live comfortably together," he would say, "but you have not enough to live upon without work, if you leave the house we own among us."

At first the two older girls were quite anxious to figure as a great artist and musician, but finally they allowed their brother to have his own way.

The young doctor was very proud of his sisters and their various attractions, and when his warm friend and fellow-student Paul Goddard appeared to make him a short visit, he led him from the office into the house adjoining it, delighted at the prospect of showing off the girls to a city gentleman.

A tour of inspection in the drawing-room preceded the actual introduction. Thus:

"This scene upon the Catskill Mountains was painted by my eldest sister, Paul. We spent the summer there for the express purpose of allowing Nora to make sketches."

"Very fine!" murmured Paul, trying his best to admire the mountains that seemed top-heavy, and clouds that appeared to be muffled in muslin bags for the summer.

"And the music is Georgina's. Georgina is Signor Skwallinni's best pupil. He compares her voice to Sontag's, and it would make you fairly dizzy to see her fingers upon the piano."

"A great talent," Paul murmured again.

"And this," continued Howard, opening the photograph album, "is Cordelia."

He added no more, and truly the face was sufficiently beautiful to need no comment. Paul spoke cordially:

"What a beautiful face! Who is this opposite your sister, Howard?"

"That is Maggie. She is my youngest sister."

"And does she paint or sing?"

"Oh, no. Maggie has no talent, and no beauty. She is a good little thing. Indeed I scarcely know how we could get along without Maggie. The others are so absorbed in their different occupations, that Maggie has to be housekeeper. But come to your room, Paul. Dinner will be ready at six."

"So Maggie is housekeeper," thought Paul, as he looked round the tasteful apartment assigned to him. "I think Miss Maggie certainly has something of her sister's artistic eye. How exquisitely those flowers are arranged, and how cool and fresh it is here, after my hot, dusty ride. Those muslin curtains look like snow-drifts."

It was a pretty room, although the carpet was but ingrain, and the furniture a cottage set. But never was bed-linen a purer white, or more daintily ruffled and ironed; never was a bureau or a wash-stand more prettily trimmed, towels more carefully placed, china and glass more glossy.

Seeking the drawing-room again, Paul found the artistic sister contemplating the scene from the back windows with rapt enthusiasm.

"Dr. Goddard," she said, advancing to meet him, "I must introduce myself. Miss Nora Clements."

Paul made the necessary speech of gratification, wondering if it was the brown of the Catskill mountains that was daubed so extensively upon the skirt of Miss Nora's blue dress, and if it was artistic meditations that had made her pin her collar crooked, and forget her cuffs altogether. She launched at once into a bewildering sea of technicalities, and called upon Paul to admire effects of cloud and shadow, light and foliage, from the back window, till he felt like a reprieved prisoner upon the entrance of another sister, who was introduced as "my sister Cordelia."

The beauty was superb. Every curl of her glossy brown hair was arranged for effect. Her creamy complexion was heightened by a dress of soft white muslin, with tiny green leaves scattered over it. She bowed with languid grace, but sat as if actually afraid to move, for fear of disarranging any fold of her faultless costume. Georgina appeared as the bell rang, and Georgina spoke but little. It made her hoarse to be always talking.

Paul was inwardly resolving to cut his visit very short, when Howard opened the door of the dining-room, and introduced:

"My sister Maggie."

She was not pretty; she was not artistic nor musical; but she was charming, to Paul's eyes, in five minutes. Her dress of cheap cambric fitted her graceful little figure perfectly; her collar and cuffs were white and smooth; her hair was dressed carefully and becomingly; and from the narrow ribbon confining it, to the rosette upon her trim little slipper, she was exquisitely neat.

Not fearing for her voice, she chatted gayly and pleasantly; not being anxious about her dress, she moved gracefully and freely; and having no specialty of talent, she could talk sensibly about the various topics her brother and his friend started.

Dinner passed off pleasantly. Paul concluded that if Maggie was housekeeper, her dinner certainly did her credit. The meat was done to a turn; the vegetables, fresh and tempting, were cooked to perfection; the pastry was light and flaky, and the table appointments neat and tasteful. Never was linen glossier and whiter, silver more glittering, or crockery more temptingly clean.

A week passed away, and Paul found himself groaning in spirit over the Misses Clements. He had wandered in search of the picturesque with Nora, had sacrificed gloves and boots in the pursuit of wonderful boughs and inaccessible flowers. He had listened to Georgina till his ears fairly ached, and he was divided in his own mind as to whether the performer or the listener deserved the most pity. He had admired Cordelia in every variety of costume, in every effective attitude; had seen her eyes raised, and the long lashes of the drooping lids; had marvelled at the whiteness of her hands, at the profusion of her curling hair: had considered her a beauty, a weariness, and a burden of spirits.

But he could find but little time to speak to Maggie. He saw the evidences of her industry and taste in every detail of housekeeping; knew whose skill directed the well-trained servants, whose fingers filled the flower vases, whose eyes were everywhere. But the very perfection of all these arrangements kept the little woman too busy for many idle moments, and in the evenings the older sisters were all-engrossing. Maggie sewed or knitted busily, while Georgina sang or played, Nora talked high art, and Cordelia struck attitudes; but Paul drew his visit to a close with a sense of disappointment. He wanted to see more of only Maggie, as he often heard her called by the others, who seemed to consider her a poor little pitiable object, who had no soul above domestic drudgery.

Two months had passed, and instead of June roses, early fall fruits and flowers were abundant at Mossvale, when Paul Goddard passed again through the village, and called at Dr. Clements' office.

"I am so sorry," said Howard, as he cordially shook his friend by the hand. "All the girls are away. Uncle James invited them to pass a month at the White Mountains, and they deserted me."

"Then you are alone?"

"Oh, not entirely. Maggie stays to keep house for me."

"Oh, Miss Maggie is here. Shall I intrude if I stay a day or two, Howard?"

"Intrude, Paul! Far from it. I am not very busy, and Maggie was telling me to-day that time actually hangs heavy upon her hands. You know she was always running for the others. Nora's studio could not be trusted to the servants, and you can imagine the mess a girl would make of Georgina's music. Then Cordelia depended entirely upon Maggie's taste and fingers for her trimmings and fallals. So now the little damsel has time to enjoy herself, and we have had some lovely rides and drives. Maggie does ride beautifully, and her horse is very fond of her; he follows her about like a kitten."

It was true that Maggie was finding many leisure hours while her sisters were away, and Paul found that the retiring, modest girl was one of the pleasantest companions it had ever been his good fortune to meet. He knew nothing of the hours between daybreak and breakfast that were spent in making the house tidy. He only saw the little hostess who was to preside over the coffee-pot and muffins.

It was an amusement the young physician enjoyed, to draw out the accomplishments that had been overshadowed by her sisters' loudly proclaimed talents and attractions. He found that Maggie could sing, with a sweet, bird-like voice, though she never attempted the difficult songs in which Georgina was supposed to excel. She could play simple pieces with feeling and expression, and her fingers would fairly dance over the keys in livelier music, that required no wonderful talent or elaborate execution.

And it was wonderful how pretty the child-like face became in Paul Goddard's eyes. There was a charm in the constant cheerfulness that kept the rosy mouth ever smiling and sweet; there was a beauty of expression in the brown eyes that mere form and color can never give; there was an attraction always in the exquisite neatness of dress that was never stiff and prim, though so carefully arranged.

Howard Clements, who loved his friend, and had hoped to secure him as a brother during his former visit, opened his eyes wide in amazement, as the days wore away and Paul lingered still in Mossville. During his first visit, Howard had hoped to see him yield to the fascinations of the elder Misses Clements, and no manœuvring mother ever took more pains than this brother to display the talents and beauties of his sisters. That any one would look twice at Maggie, when in the company of the others, had never occurred to Howard.

But in the light of Paul's evident admiration, the brother began to contemplate with different emotions the possibility of losing his little sister. He had borne with perfect composure the prospect of parting with the others. It seemed no great hardship, even when the separation involved the disappearance of Nora's master-pieces, and Georgina's music-rack. But to lose Maggie was quite another matter.

"Who," Howard asked himself in dismay—"who would superintend the servants, prepare the daintier dishes for the table, and keep the house in order? Who would wait with cheerful smiles upon him, when the duties of his profession obliged him to ask for meals at all sorts of irregular hours? Who would have his clothing always in dainty order, filling the place of a wife in the stocking darning and button replacing capacity?"

Visions of Nora in paint-bedaubed dresses, Georgina with frowsy hair, and Cordelia in inert beauty, presiding over the household, filled Howard's brains; and while he lamented, he admitted that "Paul's head was level," in his apparent choice.

Maggie could scarcely believe she heard aright when Paul Goddard pleaded for the gift of her love, and promised all loyalty and devotion if she would come to preside over his home.

"But," she said, "you cannot really love *me*."

"I really can, and do," was the reply.

"But I am so plain, and so stupid. I cannot paint nor sing, nor do anything as well as the others. I am not even pretty like Cordelia. Howard said—" She paused, and blushed.

"Well, what did Howard say?"

"Never mind."

"Tell me. That's a darling."

"He said then, that I was sure to be an old maid, and after the others were all married, I was to stay here and help him keep up a bachelor's hall. I really don't see," she added earnestly, "how Howard will get along."

"He must do as I do."

"How?"

"Seek a darling little housekeeper for a wife."

So, to the amazement of all concerned, the first Miss Clements who was married was not the artist, not the musician, not the beauty, but ONLY MAGGIE.

"THE KNIFE OF MY BOYHOOD."

BY LOUISE S. UPHAM.

I prize it! I love it, this jackknife of mine!
And no money could tempt me my prize to resign!

Through the lab'rinths of boyhood it proved a sure guide,
And the notches it cut were my safety and pride.

How long seemed the years I must patiently wait,
My finger ends tingling, and hear big boys prate
Of the wonderful things which a jackknife could do!
And they always wound up, "*But it's too sharp for you!*"

But with trowsers and pockets came the coveted prize;
And I felt—well, as proud, for a lad of my size,
As the millionaire does who has worked his own way
From a farm-house, to life in a palace to-day.

In that back seat at school, O the nicks that I made!
I made my mark *once*, though Time, the old jade,
While lifting my class-mates to honor and fame,
Has left me plodding on, still ever the same.

And the tree stands there yet, where Ruth and I stood,
While I carved both our names on its green, mossy wood;
With scarred trunk and dead branches, it lives but to prove
There is naught here so fleeting as a school-girl's first love.

This knife's neat and trim as a knife could well be,
Though I broke off the blade just here, as you see:
It was when I went fishing with Fred. for brook trout,
And the *eels* pulled so hard, our fish-poles gave out.

"And the handle?" I split that by letting it fall
Once, when I went nutting, and climbed a stone-wall:
It slid from my pocket, and was cracked on the rocks,
For jackknives, like people, can't stand too rude shocks.

When once you get started, in going down hill,
You are just like the grain that's put into the mill;
It falls and it falls, till it's ground drop by drop;
So, in going down hill, it's the *foot* where you stop.

Just so with this jackknife: in handle and blade
It's been broken more times than a routed brigade;
But fresh from the work-shop, it always comes back
With some grace or some beauty all other knives lack.

Yes, I *love* it, and *prize* it, my long-cherished friend!
It shall cling to my side till my life here shall end.
'Tis the knife of my boyhood, and its beauty ne'er fades,
Though it's had *six new handles* and *sixteen new blades!*

THE RIVAL SISTERS.

By ELIZA A. DUPUY,

AUTHOR OF THE "EVIL GENIUS," THE "WHITE TERROR," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

HESTER'S DIFFICULTIES INCREASING.

The smoke of the departing steamer which bore Spencer away had scarcely disappeared, when the carriage from Oaklands drove to the door. Within it sat Mrs. De Lorme and her two daughters, the eldest a young girl of seventeen, and the other a child of ten. She had not taken them with her to Mr. Landry's funeral, because she did not wish them to see how deeply she had been moved on that occasion, nor how many tears she had shed while on her way to the chapel to witness the sepulture of a man she had hoped would return to his home to ask her to share it with him.

Mrs. De Lorme was unscrupulous and haughty, but she was not an evil-minded woman. She had thought she was doing a meritorious thing when she brought about a match between a rich man and the penniless governess her nephew was mad enough to wish to marry, and she had never felt a single regret for what she had done. If Tom Oliver had lived, she persisted in believing that, in time, he and his wife would have settled down as comfortably as most married people do; and as to romantic love, she thought it all nonsense. *She* had married for an establishment, and been very well contented with her lot; and why should not Marion Ross do the same? She made no allowance for difference of temperament, but as most narrow-minded people do, judged others by her own standard.

The marriage had been a failure in every respect, and after all her efforts the two she had severed were reunited, and defiant of her power to part them again. She accepted the defeat, as she had said, and determined to make the best of it, without further cavil or annoyance. Since Marion was to be one of the family, she must be treated with becoming respect, and she brought her daughters especially to see her, after telling them of the approaching marriage.

They were both warmly attached to Mrs. Oliver, and heard with delight that she was soon to become their cousin's wife.

"Oh, mamma, why did you not let me see Herbert?" asked Annette, a tall, fair girl, with blonde hair, dark hazel eyes, and soft, creamy complexion. "It is three years since we were in Boston, and he was so good to me then that I shall always love him."

"If he had wished to see you he would have come over to Oaklands; but he was too much taken up with Marion to think of such children as you and Lena."

"I hope he won't be gone before we get to Le Bocage," said Lena; "but there's the packet now, and I suppose he's on it."

This conversation took place in the carriage, and as it emerged from the private road into the broader one lying in front of the levee, the wide sweep of the Mississippi was before them, with a steamer skimming over its surface.

"Yes, I suppose Herbert is on the boat, for he has too much to attend to in New Orleans to linger here any longer. He did not tell me he was going to-day, but I am sure he has left. It is best so; when he comes back he and I will meet on better terms."

She spoke more to herself than to them, but Lena opened her eyes widely, and asked:

"Have you quarrelled with Cousin Herbert, ma, because he's going to marry pretty Miss Marion?"

"'Children and fools speak the truth,'" muttered Mrs. De Lorme to herself; but she smiled on the child, and said:

"What nonsense you are talking, Lena. I have no right to interfere with Herbert in any way, and Marion is a very lovely and attractive woman. He and I do not always get on well together, for he is so outspoken I hardly know how to deal with him. We shall manage to keep on fair terms, however, after this."

"Yes; Marion will keep peace between you," said Netty. "Darling May! how glad I am that she is going to be my cousin! She'll live in New Orleans, and you will let me go there and visit her, won't you, ma?"

"Perhaps so—I will see about it. There is time enough to settle what shall be done in the future. I do believe that you are both thinking more of the meeting with Mrs. Oliver than with Estelle, although she is to be your brother's wife."

"And so we ought to be, ma, for Marion lived with us a year, and she taught both of us in that time more than we have ever learned from any one else," said Netty. "She was never cross, nor unreasonable, and I am sure I was as sorry about her marrying Mr. Oliver as she had cause to be afterward."

"Upon my word! what do *you* know about her matrimonial troubles, pray?"

"I know she ought not to have married him, and that he treated her badly, and at last died without leaving her any money. I shall never forget how pale she looked the evening she was married, nor how she cried and wrung her hands when they brought her wedding dress to try on her. I never could tell what made her go on with it, unless it was that you were so set on making her take a rich husband."

"Yes, I did induce her to accept Tom, and I don't care who knows it. I only wish that the poor fellow had lived, for they'd have got on together well enough after they were used to the matrimonial yoke. The happiest marriages are not those that are all sunshine at first."

"I don't know about that, ma. I should want the sunshine first, last, and always; and Marion ought not to have taken Mr. Oliver, when she knew she did not love him best of all in the world."

"One would really think that you had reflected deeply on such subjects as love and marriage, Miss De Lorme," said her mother sharply.

"I am too young to know much about such things," replied Netty simply. "I only speak from instinct, ma; and Marion told me once that mine are generally right and good."

"I hope they are; but if they lead you to be too romantic, you and I may clash in the future. I intend you to make as good a *worldly* match as Ray will secure when he becomes Estelle Landry's husband. I am not going to have my daughters marry nobodies."

"But Ray wasn't thinking of Estelle's fortune when he asked her to marry him," said Netty eagerly. "He was as much in love with her as if she had not a cent in the world."

"I believe he was, poor fellow, and I am almost sorry now that I insisted on his going away. But for Mr. Landry's influence I would not have done so," said the mother, in a softened tone. "I shall be glad to have my boy back with me, and if he chooses to come even without my sanction, I shall not be hard on him. Estelle is very attractive, and Ray may as well secure her before other lovers can tempt her to be untrue to him."

"But, ma, there can be no danger of that, for Estelle is as deeply attached to my brother as he is to her. Her letters to me assure me of that."

"Yes, I believe she loves him truly, but women's hearts are strange things, and flattery can do a great deal with a young girl. Estelle will be sure of a great deal of that. Somehow I think she is greatly changed from the affectionate, simple-hearted creature I saw in Newport three years ago. She has matured wonderfully in that time, but she was then but a mere slip of a girl."

"Did she disappoint you in any way, ma? You said so little about her when you came home yesterday, that I fancied you were not quite satisfied."

"Pooh! why should I be dissatisfied with my future daughter? She is beautiful, highly educated, and a great heiress. I should be very unreasonable, if I were not contented with the brilliant alliance Raymond will come home to make. But here we are at Le Bocage, and Marion is on the gallery watching the last curl of smoke from the distant steamer. I know now that Herbert was certainly on her, and I can't say that I am sorry he's gone."

"I wish I had seen him, but we shall have all the more of Marion for his going away;" and the speaker sprang from the open carriage and ran up the steps, followed by her younger sister.

When Mrs. De Lorme followed at a more dignified pace, she found the two clinging to Mrs. Oliver, and caressing her with every evidence of affection. The grand dame held out her hand, and smilingly said:

"Don't let those pests smother you, Marion. When I see how fond they are of you, my own heart warms toward you, although you have done so much to overset the plans I had formed for my nephew. Let us bury the dead past, and be good friends in the time to come, in spite of any grudge we may have had toward each other. Forgive and forget is my motto."

Marion thought it was easy enough for the speaker to forgive when she had so little to complain of, but with herself it was widely different; however, for the sake of family peace, she accepted the olive-branch held out, and said:

"You are Herbert's aunt, Mrs. De Lorme, and for his sake, I accept the amnesty you offer. I wish to be on the best terms with all his relations, and as the mother of these dear girls, you also have a strong claim upon me."

"In myself then I am nothing," said the lady, with a slight frown. "I thought you would meet my advances at least half way, Mrs. Oliver, for I do not often concede as much as I have in this instance."

"I appreciate your concession at its just value, Mrs. De Lorme," replied Marion tranquilly. "I can quite understand that now that I am to become one of your family, you can make up your mind to tolerate me. It remains for me to prove to you in the future that Herbert has not done an unwise thing in selecting me as the partner of his life."

"I can only hope that neither of you will have cause to repent it," was the stiff reply; and then Mrs. De Lorme coldly asked:

"Is Miss Landry indisposed this morning? or does she think it beneath her dignity to meet her friends in southern fashion? I am half afraid that Estelle's northern training has unfitted her for the free and easy ways which I fell into myself with some difficulty, when I first came to Louisiana to reside."

"I think you need have no apprehensions on that score," replied Marion, with a smile. "Estelle has been walking on the gallery with Herbert the greater part of the morning, and she thought it best to lie down a few moments before you came. Come in, if you please, and I will send to let her know that you have arrived."

"Oh, please, may I go in and announce myself?" asked Annette eagerly. "Estelle and I are old friends, and we have kept up a constant correspondence ever so long."

Mrs. Oliver hesitated slightly, but Mrs. De Lorme decisively said:

"Of course you may go. Estelle will be only too glad to see you, for you are remarkably like your brother."

Her meditated intrusion thus sanctioned, the young girl sprang away, and Lena would have followed her if her mother had not taken her hand, and said:

"No, no—one interloper at a time will be quite enough. Do you stay here till Estelle comes out to give us a tardy welcome to Le Bocage."

Mrs. Oliver saw that she was offended that Hester had not been on the look-out for, and eager to receive her in her home; but she played the part of hostess, and led the conversation to other topics with the tact she usually displayed, and the brow of Mrs. De Lorme insensibly relaxed, although the person she came especially to visit did not make her appearance for many moments.

In the mean time Annette, who knew which apartment had been fitted up for the young mistress, went straight to Hester's door, and after tapping lightly upon it, opened it and went in, to find the object of her search with her head buried in the sofa pillows, and her hands over her ears, as if to shut out the sounds of the arrival that had just taken place.

The visitor rushed rapidly across the floor, and laid her hand on the shoulder of the prostrate figure, but she was too much excited and surprised by what she saw to speak at once.

Imagining the intruder to be Zelma, Hester cried, in a stifled voice:

"How dare you come in here without leave? Go away this moment, and learn better manners if you expect to be kept near me. I'll come out when I am ready, and not a moment sooner. I am in no hurry to meet that—"

She stopped abruptly, conscious that her true feelings toward Mrs. De Lorme should not be made patent to her own servants, and she rose up and turned her flashing eyes upon the face of Annette, which had grown pale with astonishment, as she heard this outburst from the gentle and refined being she had always considered Estelle Landry.

"I—I beg pardon," she faltered. "I should not have come to you in this unceremonious way, but I—I thought you would be glad to see me, Estelle."

For an instant Hester was at a loss to place her, for the last time she had seen Annette De Lorme she was so small a child that Mrs. Blake's daughter had no recollection of her; but the family resemblance between the brother and sister gave her a clue by which she immediately profited. Hester sprang forward, and throwing her arms around Miss De Lorme, exclaimed, with well-acted delight:

"My dearest Netty, how glad I am to see you once more, and how rude I was to speak to you as I did just now. But Zelma has been annoying me about an old crone on the place who says she nursed my father; but I won't see her, for she has a cancer on her face, and I cannot bear to look at anything that disgusts me. You look as if you thought my words just now referred to you or your mother, but I assure you they did not. I am only too happy to see you both at Le Bocage. My head is aching, but that does not matter much on so auspicious a day as this."

Annette De Lorme was very young and unsuspicious, and she was tenderly attached to the girl who had so long been looked on as her brother's future wife; so she accepted the excuse so readily invented, and kissing Hester, said, with a bright smile:

"I know that we are welcome, dear, for Ray's sake, if not for our own. But I hoped, after our intimacy at Newport, three years ago, that you would also care for me a little on my own account, Estelle."

"So I do, my dear sensitive plant; but three years count as so many ages when people live apart; and you have grown so tall that it is a wonder I knew you at all. I have all your sweet letters, Nettie, and I cannot tell you what a comfort they have been to me, especially since my poor Ray was sent away on his travels."

"You did not like it, I know, though you submitted to the decree of the elders; but he'll come back now, and *entre nous*, I think ma will not be greatly displeased if he does, though she means, all the same, to write to him to finish his tour."

Hester laughed, and turned to the mirror to see if her hair was in presentable order.

"I think Ray *will* come, and you will owe it to me that he does so. Of course your mother will be pleased to have him back sooner than she lately hoped, and she will be equally pleased to have me safely married to him before I can change my mind."

"Oh, Estelle! how can you even hint at such a possibility on your part!" And the young girl's voice expressed even more than her words.

"There, dear, don't get into a twitter because I am silly enough to talk nonsense. Ray is all the world to me, as no one knows better than yourself. I am not as romantic as I was in those old days at Newport; but I shall be true as steel to the man I have pledged myself to marry."

"I am certain of that, but I beg that you will not talk in this way again. Mamma will be sure to question me about what was said of my brother, and she will not like such speeches."

Hester shrugged her shoulders almost disdainfully.

"Mrs. De Lorme is quite welcome to learn all she can from you; but if she doubts my faith to Ray, she must be wonderfully suspicious. Where could I find half so desirable a *parti?* Young, handsome, rich, and devoted to me; how could I hope to find all these agreeable qualities combined in any other man?"

She was brushing her hair out as she spoke, and she turned and faced Nettie, holding a long curl in her hand. All she had said with reference to her brother had given the young girl an uncomfortable feeling, and she changed the theme rather abruptly.

"What beautiful hair you have, Estelle. I never observed before that it ripples to the very roots, and you did not wear it in curls when I saw you in Newport."

With perfect composure, Hester said:

"The ripple is perhaps due to the absurd fashion of *wigging* the hair, which came in last year. At night I have mine put up in small plaits, and draw one of the strands through like a gathering thread in a ruffle. That makes a beautiful crimp, and does not injure the hair like using hair-pins. Your *chevelure* would be lovely, treated in that way."

"No, thank you. I am not going to comply with fashion so far as to ruin my blonde locks. I am contented to let them remain as Nature made them. And it seems very strange to me that white people will attempt to imitate the frizzy heads of negroes. *They* would do anything to straighten their wool, if there was any possibility of accomplishing it. You must use very superior art, Estelle, for the wave in your hair looks perfectly natural."

Hester flushed slightly, but she carelessly replied:

"Oh, 'practice makes perfect,' you know. My hair has been much admired, and I take pains to arrange it to suit me. Shall we go out now to your mother? I am afraid she will think we have gossipped too long already, though I did it on purpose to allow Marion a chance to get on good terms with her. You know she is going to marry Herbert, I suppose."

"Yes; mamma told me, and I am so glad. I love Marion dearly, and ma will be quite satisfied with the match after it has taken place. She wished my cousin to marry a rich girl, you know, as his brother did."

"I dare say; but Herbert has done far better for himself than Mr. Lionel Spencer. He will get a lovely and affectionate woman for a wife, and the dower I intend to bestow on Marion will enable her husband to take as good a position in a few years as the elder brother has."

"How generous you are, dear Estelle! but can you give her so much as that? Cousin Lionel got ever so much money with his wife."

"I do not mean that I will endow Marion with great wealth. I shall loan Herbert enough to make him an equal partner in his firm, and accept no interest from him for three years. He is an admirable man of business, and he will accomplish the rest for himself."

"Oh, I understand. You can easily do that, and not feel it much. Ray helped my cousin, and ma tried to make him dictate conditions; but he only laughed, and said it was useless, for Fate would be too strong for either of them. I did not know what he meant then, but I begin to understand now."

"Your mother understood him perfectly, no doubt. Ah, this is Lena, I suppose."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

MRS. DE LORME OFFENDED.

Hester and Nettie were crossing the hall as the last sentences were exchanged, and Lena was loitering there, to claim acquaintance with her future sister. She had seen Estelle Landry at Newport, several years before, and young as she then was, she retained a vivid recollection of the gentle creature who had petted her. Lena sprang toward Hester, clung to her neck, and kissed her again and again, and she accepted the child's caresses with apparent warmth, though in her heart there was no other feeling than repulsion toward any member of the De Lorme family, save the son who had been her playmate and admirer in her childish days. She entered the parlor with the child still clinging to her hand, and Mrs. De Lorme rather stiffly said:

"I am sorry that my visit was so ill-timed, Estelle. I am afraid that you would have preferred keeping your own room to-day, but as I am so old a friend, I hoped you would have no scruples as to receiving me in its seclusion. My visit was especially to *you*, and I brought the children to call on Mrs. Oliver. They are not to be allowed to interfere with our communications, if you please, for I have much to say to you in private."

Though internally shrinking from the proposed interview, Hester sweetly said:

"I assure you, Mrs. De Lorme, that I should have been greatly disappointed if you had failed to come over this morning. I am suffering from a slight headache, but that will wear off, I hope, as the day advances. We have many subjects to discuss that are of mutual interest to us, and Marion will be only too happy to take charge of her young friends once more, while we are thus occupied."

"Nothing could afford me more pleasure," was the prompt reply of Mrs. Oliver. "Put on your hat, Lena, and we will go out and have a talk with the old gray parrot that lives in the conservatory."

The child wistfully said:

"If ma doesn't mind, I'd like to stay with my pretty Estelle. That was the name I always called you by, you know," she added, turning to Hester, whose hand she still held clasped in her own.

Her mother frowned, but she lightly said:

"You have almost won the child's heart from me, Estelle, and no wonder, when I remember how you devoted yourself to her amusement when you were last together. You must go away a little while, Lena, as I wish to speak alone with your friend. I scarcely thought you would refuse to go anywhere with Mrs. Oliver."

"Oh, I love Miss Marion very much, but I hate to go away from my pretty Estelle just as I have found her again. But she don't look like she used to, though she's just as pretty as ever."

"You silly child! when she played with you, and took you out to walk on the beach at Newport, she was a young girl, and now she has grown into a woman. There—run off now, and amuse yourself till you are sent for."

The three passed into the conservatory, and Hester threw herself upon a comfortable lounging chair, so placed that the subdued light admitted into the room did not fall upon her face.

Mrs. De Lorme was seated opposite to her, and she began her inquisition by asking for minute details of the accident through which Mr. Landry had lost his life, and of what had been done for his relief.

When these had been given, she asked:

"Who were the people that acted the part of good Samaritans toward you and your father? My mother wrote to me about a widow and her daughter who went to him, and referred me to you for further information—if you chose to give it. Of course you will make no mystery about those people, though I have an uneasy suspicion in my mind that they are the very last persons you should have been thrown with."

"You are quite right in your surmise: it was Mrs. Blake who came to nurse my father, and I know why you think that I should not have been exposed to the chances of such a meeting," replied Hester with perfect composure, and, in fact, she rather enjoyed the look of dismay that came to the face of Mrs. De Lorme.

"Good Heavens! you don't tell me that *that* woman dared to approach Armand Landry in his last hours! That she has spoken with you, yet allowed you to escape scatheless, when you were helpless and in her power?"

"That you see me here, sound in mind and body, is the best proof that Mrs. Blake is not so black-hearted a person as you imagine. Fate willed that we should be thrown on her compassion, and it did not fail us. I can be just to her, though I know all that you can tell me. Mrs. Spencer told me of that old accusation against her, but I take the liberty to disbelieve it. A person who was so kind to me when she might have taken advantage of my situation, cannot be so callous a being as that story would lead me to believe."

"How can you talk so, Estelle, when the evidence against her was conclusive? If your father could have been induced to lay bare so terrible a record in a court of justice, that woman would have been hung. He was sensitive, and he had the foolish idea that he had injured the creature, when it is well known that he was drugged in her father's house, and married to her while in a state that unfitted him to act for himself. The evil she afterward did him more than avenged any fancied wrong he may have inflicted on *her*."

"I think the wrong was a very real and bitter one, and so my father regarded it, as his subsequent conduct proved. He had made a liberal provision for Mrs. Blake, and was on his way to see her, when his fate overtook him. It is now my duty to carry out his intentions, and I shall be even more liberal than he was."

This was not said defiantly, but coolly and deliberately, and Mrs. De Lorme fully understood that remonstrance would be useless. She haughtily said:

"Do as you please, Miss Landry, since you see fit to reject advice before it is offered. I have only this to say—I do not believe that your father meant to see that infamous woman at all. He wished to provide for the girl, and his errand was to see *her*, not her mother. I think myself that Hagar Blake's daughter should have been taught a trade, and made to earn her own living. Her mother's crime had taken from her all right to anything better at Armand Landry's hands."

There was such bitter scorn in her accents as she spoke the last words, that Hester writhed beneath it, and hated her more intensely than before. She could not trust herself to speak for at least a moment, but when she did so, she had recovered sufficient self-control to say with outward calmness:

"We will not discuss this question further, if you please, Mrs. De Lorme, since it seems to excite you so unpleasantly. As to Miss Blake, she is my father's daughter, and I honor him for having recognized her claims upon him. It shall be my care that she is amply provided for, and no one shall claim the right to control me in this matter. You are the mother of my affianced husband, and I am ready and willing to be guided by you in other things; but in this I must follow my own ideas of right and justice."

"I give up all intention of guiding or influencing you from this moment," said the irate lady, her face white with passion and her lips trembling. "If my son will listen to *me*, he will make his tour an indefinite one; for, with my consent, he shall not return here to claim as his wife a girl who shows herself so regardless of the proprieties of life, and so defiant of the mother who has devoted herself to him from his infancy."

Hester had fully intended to make herself acceptable to Mrs. De Lorme till she was established in the position she had seized on; but all the bitter blood in her nature had been aroused by the words of that lady with reference to herself and her mother, and she now gave her head an insolent toss, and defiantly said:

"Advise Raymond by all means, and see how much attention he will pay to your wishes. He will hasten to my side as soon as he hears of my father's death, and nothing—*nothing* will prevent him from claiming my troth-plight as soon as I will consent to give him my hand."

Mrs. De Lorme arose and walked the floor several moments, too angry, and too much astonished, to trust herself to speak. Could *this* be the gentle and refined girl she had known from the earliest years of her life? What change had come over her, that she dared assert herself in this unbecoming manner?

She at length drew near to Hester, and looking down on her, slowly said:

"Raymond may be infatuated enough to do as you say, in defiance of my disapprobation; but you have chosen to repudiate my advice on a subject that is more vital to yourself than to me, and I shall not forgive the impertinence. I may, for my son's sake, consent to pass it over, if he insists on marrying you, but I shall never again take the tender interest in you which I have the right to feel for your father's daughter."

Hester had also reflected while Mrs. De Lorme was pacing the floor, and she felt how impolitic her course had been. With a sudden change of manner, she seized the unwilling hand of her companion, and carrying it to her lips, deprecatingly said:

"Oh, forgive me, and take me to your heart again. I—I did not mean to offend you, but I have suffered so much of late that all my nerves are out of tune. I feel that I *must* do what I have promised for that unfortunate girl and her mother, and I have had so much said to me against them that it is no wonder I rebel against further interference. Let us avoid that painful subject in future, and you shall have no cause to complain of me. Do not wound my poor Ray by telling him that you are offended with me. It will break my heart to become the cause of dissension between you, and I know that Raymond will not give me up, any more than I will consent to relinquish him."

Mrs. De Lorme believed the last statement as thoroughly as the speaker did, and she thought it would be as well to avoid a rupture with the son who had shown her from boyhood that he had a will of his own. She coldly said:

"I accept your apology, Estelle, but I must say that I have never seen so radical a change in any girl as seems to have taken place in you within the last four years. When I saw you three years ago, you seemed all sweetness and compliance; and now, almost in the first moment of meeting, you show traits of character that, I must say, astonish me."

"I was little more than a child then. I am a woman now, but not an unreasonable or ungrateful one, as you will find when you know me better. Do not judge me harshly, Mrs. De Lorme, for I am most anxious to keep on the best terms with you, for Raymond's sake. He loves me, and he is also deeply attached to you; so let us keep peace. I will listen to your advice on any other subject than the one we have just discussed, and I entreat that it shall be in future interdicted between us."

"I shall not be likely to speak of it again," said Mrs. De Lorme dryly. "One rebuff is sufficient for me, and all the words I could utter would be useless, if you do not feel how unnatural it is for Ellinor Russell's daughter to defend the woman who certainly destroyed her mother by such slow and subtle means as sicken the heart even to think of."

Hester covered her face with her hands, and seemed to shiver with emotion. When she looked up again, she was paler than usual, but she calmly said:

"Such is your conviction, but it is not mine. Let us speak no more of this, for we can never agree, and I wish you to love me as your child—to find in me nothing to disapprove. We will talk of Ray now, and forget the unpleasant words that have passed between us. I have written to him myself, and intreated him to finish his tour, and that I believe is what you wish yourself."

"I think it will be best," was the cold reply; "but I scarcely expected you to agree with me. But for your father's opposition, you would have married him before he left, and accompanied him to Europe."

"Yes; but you and papa united against us, and we yielded. Though my father is in his grave I respect his wishes, and yours are also entitled to consideration. It will be best to defer the marriage till my year of mourning has expired; but if Ray comes back at once, he will, with his usual impetuosity, insist that I shall give him my hand without delay."

"I think it likely he will, and therefore it is my wish that he shall travel another year. I shall write to him urging him to do so, and I hope he will accept my advice."

With a bright smile, Hester said:

"But if he does not—if he comes, I can refuse him nothing that he has the right to ask. My sacred word was pledged to him to give him my hand as soon as he returned to his native land, and I cannot forfeit it."

"I believe he will exact the fulfillment of the pledge," said Mrs. De Lorme rather drearily; "but if your conduct to-day is a true index to your temper, I fear that there is not much happiness in store for either of you. Raymond is a man of strong will, excessive pride, and the nicest sense of honor; how do you think he will receive the shock of hearing that you have not only been brought in contact with those base people, but that you actually defend the woman by whose agency your own mother was laid in her early grave, and your father's life made desolate?"

"If you will leave *me* to tell him the story, Ray will think that I have only done what was right and best. As to my private opinion on the subject of Mrs. Blake's guilt, he will have no right to call me to account for that, if he *is* to be my husband. He is too noble himself not to understand how impossible it is for a pure woman to give credence to so horrible a crime as that of which you accuse that unfortunate creature. But we have agreed to speak of her no more, and I hope you will not think me too presumptuous if I say that this must positively be the last time this subject is mentioned between us. Further discussion can do no good, and I am sure that on reflection the goodness of your heart will lead you to excuse a young girl like myself for refusing to believe in the alleged turpitude of one of her own sex."

As Hester ceased speaking, she held out her hand with her sweetest smile, and Mrs. De Lorme took it loosely in her own, but dropped it almost immediately, and with freezing hauteur said:

"I will leave you to tell your own story, for no good could come from interference on my part. Raymond is so madly in love with you, that he will marry you in spite of all I could say to open his eyes to the singular lack of right feeling that is apparent to me. I will try to forget what has passed between us to-day, Estelle, for I wish to feel kindly toward you, in spite of the shock you have given me."

"Indeed, I intend you to feel more than kind—I shall not be contented unless you love me dearly, although I will have my own way about Mrs. Blake," said Hester, with effusion.

At that moment the bell for luncheon sounded, and the voices of Annette and Lena were heard on the front gallery.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

KICKED OUT.

We wouldn't write this story for the printer if Dingley hadn't himself told it to a circle of friends a few mornings after its occurrence.

One evening during the past winter Jeff. Dingley and Tom Pulcifer came down from Maveric Mills to attend one of the Assemblies given in our place. They joined in the dance, and they also joined in the circle of select and privileged spirits that met at the shrine of the Black Bottle in a distant closet; so that in the small hours of the morning, when the fiddler had packed away his fiddle, their heads were humming strangely. In this condition they sought the Marshall House, and asked for a room, and the landlord conducted them to a chamber in which were two beds.

"All right," said Jeff., to the host; and to his companion he added,—"Jes' a bed apiece, ole fellah. You (hic) take'r 'at one, an' I'll (hic) er take 'is."

They had succeeded in removing their boots and coats when a puff of wind from an open crack of the window extinguished their lamp, leaving them in darkness dense and impenetrable. But never mind. They had got the lay of the land, and could turn in as they were; and after a deal of stumbling and fumbling, they hit the bedside, and keeled over, both upon the same bed.

"Hallo!" cried Jeff., "there's somebor'y in my bed!"

"So there is in mine," sputtered Tom.

"Le's kick 'em out,—blast 'em!"

"All right! Here's at it!"

The kicking process followed, with a final thump of a heavy body upon the floor.

"Hi-yah!" shouted Jeff., "I've kicked my man out."

"You've beat me," sputtered Tom. "My man's kicked *me* out!"

This was the last effort of their expiring energies, and their relative positions were not discovered until next morning. Tom suggested that the matter should be kept quiet; but Dingley couldn't hold it. S. C., JR.

"BE GOOD."

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

When Walter Scott's majestic soul
 Was in the hour to step from earth
Unto the upper world where roll
 Love's oceans for eternal worth,
Among the ones who stood beside
 The great, pure bard, with low, sad breath,
Was his loved son-in-law and pride,
 More dear, if possible, near death.

In that deep hush the father's eyes
 On him gazed tenderly a while—
His grand pale face, as lit from skies,
 All luminous with a calm smile:
And now, soft as a wave that breathes
 A last note on a listening strand,
Where shadow with the moonlight wreathes,
 He whispers, "*Lockhart, here; your hand!*"

Their hands are clasped. Again his lips
 Are tremulous—what would they speak?
He knows, even near this life's eclipse,
 How longs that soul for glory's peak;
And how to him some wealth of earth
 Was ever needful as man stood—
But now just at the Heavenly birth,
 He whispers, "*Dear Lockhart, be* GOOD!"

This not because his son was e'er
 To Virtue's sacred splendor blind,
But that he feels the more that here
 She was by God the inmost shrined.
O, wondrous one, how glorious thus
 Thou step'dst to Heaven from mortal rood,
And crowning thy mind's Alp for us,
 Shall beam that "*Dear Lockhart, be* GOOD!"

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MILLY MORE'S LETTER.

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.

I'm Aunty Gunter. Job Gunter is my husband. We keep the Anchor Port post-office and a store, and sell groceries and garden sass, calico, shoes, and medicines, like other folks in our line, when anybody asks for 'em.

When a ship comes in, and the sailors come home to their wives and mothers, trade grows brisk. The housekeepers do their best, and the raisins and dried currents and eggs and butter go off finely, and it's worth while to lay in ribbons for the girls, and smoking tobacco and long pipes for the men.

Jack and his wages make old Anchor Port brisk for a while, but at last he sails away, and all the women seem to ask for will be letters—letters, letters, letters, when they have a right to expect them, and when they haven't, all the same.

It's "Please, Aunty Gunter, look over them, and see if there aren't one for me;" and it's, "Please, Uncle Gunter; it might have got mixed up and overlooked somehow;" often and often—God help the poor souls!—after Jack lies at the bottom of the sea, and nothing will ever reach them but the news of his shipwreck. But plenty of letters come after all, and sometimes we have to read them for the folks, Job and I, and so we get to know something of their lives.

Milly More could read and write herself, but still I always knew when she had a letter from Will Masset. I knew it by the handwriting, and I knew it by her blushes, and by that happy look in her face. When he came home, she bought ribbons and bits of lace by the apronful; and I knew where the packages of candy that he bought were to go. And I used to keep Job from fishing down in Pullman's creek of afternoons, because I knew that was where Milly and Will liked to walk. Courting time comes but once in a lifetime, and I always like to see it prosper.

At last he sailed away, second mate of the *Golden Dove;* and when he came back from that voyage, they were to be married.

It was a sad day when that ship sailed. Mrs. Captain Rawdon and her girls were crying on the shore. Twenty women from the Port and five from the Hill were there to see her set sail.

It was a grim, gray day, and the voyage was to be a long one.

It was under our old sycamore that Will took Milly to his breast.

"Don't fret, darling!" he said. "I'll come back safe and sound. I couldn't drown now; I've too much to live for."

Poor boy! in spite of that, the *Golden Dove* went down in mid-seas, and only three men reached Anchor Port to tell how Captain Rawdon and the rest were lost, at dead of night, in a most woeful storm.

Captain Kincaid brought the news up to Mrs. Rawdon. He stopped at our store to tell about it. A nice old man. A bachelor still, at fifty eight, and as handsome, with his white hair and red cheeks, as a picture.

That was twelve months ago, the night I went into the store to sort things out, as I always did Saturday nights. Through the week Job used to get everything mixed up—letters in my tea boxes, candles in the letter box, eggs where they oughtn't to be, and all the place askew. It was a warm autumn night, and Captain Kincaid's vessel was in port, and we had plenty of custom. Job served the people while I tidied up. I found half the last mail in a sugar box, and clothes pins in the ground coffee canister, and I just dumped them out.

"Gather up your letters, Job," said I. "What possesses you, old man?"

And he laughed, and piled 'em up. And I made a vow to myself that I'd keep the sugar box full after that, so that he shouldn't use it for the mail.

I had twenty-four pounds of sugar known as "coffee crushed," because it was prepared especially to use in coffee. That was the finest sugar Anchor Hill folks often bought, though I had a little cut and powdered by me, in case Mrs. Rawdon, or Mrs. Dr. Speer, or the minister's lady should send in; and I took the paper up and tilted it over the japanned box, pouring it in in a nice smooth stream, when who should come running into the shop but Milly More. She was not dressed carefully, and her eyes were red with crying.

She asked for some tea, and while Job was weighing it she whispered to me:

"Oh! Aunty Gunter, have you looked today? Isn't there a letter from Will? He said he couldn't die. I don't feel as if he could. Mightn't he write, after all? Do look."

"My Pet," says I, "it's a year ago that the *Golden Dove* went down. It isn't likely. And He don't let those live that want to always. It isn't likely, dear, but I'll look."

I took the letters in my hand one by one. Many of them would make hearts glad before the shutters were up that night; but none for Milly! It couldn't be expected, of course.

I told her so; but I took her into my little back parlor, and made her sit down there.

I talked as good as I could to her; but what good does talking do?

"Oh, Aunty," says she, "I know it seems as if I was a fool; but I waked up hoping this morning. I don't believe he is gone. I can't, I can't."

"When baby died—the only one we ever had—I thought I never should believe it," said I. "But I had Job; and you have your mother and sister, Milly."

At that she burst into tears, and put her head down on my knee.

"I must tell you," said she. "They want me to marry Captain Kincaid. He's courting me. He fell in love with me the night he brought the news to Mrs. Captain Rawdon; I was there sewing, and heard it all. Oh, how cruel to fall in love with a poor girl at such a time! And he asks me to be his wife. And mother and Fanny shall always have a home, he says. And you know how poor we are. And they're angry at me for saying No. And how can I, how can I, when my heart is in the sea with Willie?"

"Captain Kincaid!" I said, and I couldn't say any more; she took my breath away. She was a nice, pretty girl; but the Captain was rich, elegant and stylish. An old family he came of, too. It was an honor for Milly More.

"Not just yet," said I, after a while. "Perhaps you'll feel better. He's old, I know, but he's a splendid man."

"You too!" said she. "You too! Nobody understands. It isn't as if I had made up my mind, like all the rest. Will will always be a living man to my mind. I don't think any one ever loved but me. Nobody understands—nobody."

I kissed her, and coaxed her; and I said no word about her changing her mind; but for all that I kept thinking of it in a kind of maze.

"Captain Kincaid! such a gentleman as that! Old as he was, could she fail to see the honor?"

But when I told Job, says he:

"Jerusalem! a young, pretty girl like Milly! Why don't he go after some widder, or an oldish gal? Milly is too young for him. Poor Will! What a pity! They jest suited each other."

I couldn't help it though. Mrs. Captain Kincaid would have things that Milly More could never dream of: silk dresses and velvet cloaks, jewelry, and stuffed chairs in her best rooms, a silver ice-pitcher if she chose, like Mrs. Captain Rawdon. She might have a carriage too, and a pair of ponies. And I liked Milly, and wouldn't have envied her her luck one bit; and I didn't wonder at Mrs. More and Fanny.

Once having given me her confidence, Milly didn't stop; and Mrs. More came over to talk about it too, until at last I fairly up and sided with the old lady.

"Milly," says I, "Will is gone, and you aren't his widow, to wear weeds all your life—not that many do, if they can help it, seems to me—and Captain Kincaid is as good as man can be, and you'll be happy with him. You can't help loving him as much as there's any need to love.

After that she stopped talking much to me. She used to give me strange looks though. I knew all about it. I knew that her heart was in the sea; but Will was gone, and why should she refuse what Providence offered?

The captain staid at the Port three months, and at last we worried her into promising to be his wife—old Mrs. More, Fanny and I. She just gave up at last.

"It don't matter much, after all," she said. "I must be going out of my mind, for I never can stop watching and hoping. I shall die soon, I suppose, whether I marry or not."

After that she never spoke of Will, and Mrs. More told me she was engaged; and she wore a diamond ring upon her finger. And the day before the ship sailed she was to marry Captain Kincaid, so that she might go to Europe with him.

A year and three months since the *Golden Dove* went down. Well, no one can tell what changes a little while will bring. I used to hope that I hadn't had much hand in it after all, when I thought it over, and remembered poor Will, and how he took her in his arms under the sycamore.

But then, you see, Mrs. More's sight had failed, so that she couldn't do fine sewing, and Fanny wasn't of much account except to look at. It was a hard life that lay before Milly. It was good for her to marry Captain Kincaid, and have rest and comfort; wasn't it?

"To-morrow is the wedding," said I to Job. "It's going to be in the church. Miss Salsbury is finishing my silver-gray poplin. It sets splendid. We'll have Ben Barnes in to keep store, and go, won't we? You'll like to see Milly off, won't you?"

"I wish it was Will Masset," says Job.

"Poor Will!" says I, and I went on tidying, though it was a Friday. I should be so busy next day. I got out my big paper of sugar, and I got down my japanned sugar box, never empty yet since that day I filled it up. And then Job, sorting the letters, looks up at me.

"Never begrudged you anything so much as I do that box," says he. "Best thing I ever put the mail into. This here wooden thing with a slide is a pesky bother."

"Law me!" says I, "if I'd knowed you wanted it, you should have had it. I didn't think you had any plan in it: jest stick 'em anywhere, I thought you would. I'll empty the box; I've got one that'll do. And I'm glad you spoke before I filled it up."

So with that I spread a big paper on the counter and emptied out the sugar.

It had packed a little, and came out in a sort of cake. There it laid white and shiny, and on top of it, whiter and shinier, laid *a letter*—a letter with a ship mark upon it, and this superscription:

"Miss Milly More, Anchor Port, Maine, United States of America."

Three months ago—poor stupid!—I had emptied my best coffee crushed in upon it, and there it was.

Three months ago she had come down to me and asked for a letter, and I'd thought her half crazy; and I'd have given more money than there was in the till, to have dared to tear that letter open on the spot and read it, though I knew the hand was Will Masset's.

"This can't wait," says I.

"No," says Job, "it can't, with that wedding coming off to-morrow."

Then I stopped and thought. Let it lie until it is called for, and she'll be Mrs. Captain Kincaid, with her silks and her velvets, and her fine house and her carriage, all the same. This comes from a shipwrecked sailor, poorer now than when he went away.

"Perhaps I'd better wait until the wedding is over, Job," said I.

And my old man came across the room and put his arm about my waist.

"Nancy," says he, "you and I was young folks once. I used to think something was better than money and fine doings then. And though we old folks may get a little hard—though to be up in the world seems so much, and all that old sweetness so silly, why, it will come back sometimes. You remember how he kissed her there under the sycamore; and—Nancy, we couldn't wait until after the wedding, either of us."

I put my arms about Job's neck, and I kissed kim; and then I got my sun-bonnet and ran over to Mrs. More's.

Captain Kincaid was there. I stood at the door with my letter behind my back.

"Won't you walk in?" says Mrs. More.

"I—I haven't time," says I. "It's only an errand. It's a little singular. Milly, there's a—a—"

"My letter! my letter!" cried Milly. "It has come at last!"

How she knew it, Heaven knows. She hadn't had a glimpse of it.

It was the old sailor's story: a shipwreck, a deserted island, wretched months spent in hoping for succor, and a sail at last. A vessel outward bound had picked him up. He would be home in three months.

"Three months!" said Milly. "Oh, how can I wait?"

And then says I:

"Milly, forgive a poor old stupid goose. That letter has been lying under my best coffee crushed three months and a day. And there's a vessel in the offing now."

So it *was* Will, after all; and Job and I went to the wedding with happy hearts. And no need to pity Capt. Kincaid either, for he married Fanny More before the year was over.

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A MUTUAL MISTAKE.

Adolphus Spinnett is a young man, but he has travelled, and unhesitatingly asserts that he has cut his eye-teeth. He is a man with an immense amount of self-esteem, and it hurts him fearfully to be made the butt of a joke, or to get the heavy end of a repartee. Not long since Adolphus was upon the Fall River steamer, bound for Boston, and while in the cabin he missed his silver-mounted cigar case. Near him sat a man habited in the garb of the sea—a brown-faced, weather-beaten man—and him Adolphus accused of having stolen his missing property, as he had sat nearest to him, and had once touched his elbow. The seafaring man shook his head, and modestly denied the soft impeachment. Adolphus persisted in the accusation, and was so loud in his complaints that quite a crowd gathered around. By and by, after more careful search, he found the cigar case in the pocket of his own duster, which he had thrown across the back of his seat, and he turned to the man of the sea and offered an apology for the unintentional insult.

"It was all a mistake, I assure you,—a mistake, 'pon my word."

"Don't trouble yourself," replied the sailor, with a nod and a smile—a smile, however, in which there was a deal of contempt. "The mistake was mutual. You mistook me for a thief, *while I had mistaken you for a gentleman!*"

Shortly afterward a friend, searching for Adolphus, found him alone in his state-room, locked in. C.

◆

SCIENCE.

It is a curious fact that ninety per cent. of the lion cubs born in the gardens of the Zoological Society, Regent's Park, London, have cleft palates, so that they are unable to take nourishment, and consequently soon die. At the Dublin Zoological Gardens, however, there are very few such cases, eighty-six cubs, or nine-tenths of those born, having been successfully reared. This difference is attributed by Prof. Haughton to the difference in the food of the parent lions, those in London being fed only on the meat of large animals, so that they are unable to eat any of the bones; whereas at Dublin a goat twice a week is given them, which they eat, bones and all. This provides the bone phosphates needed for the organization of the young animals. Prior to the adoption of this method of feeding at Dublin, malformation of the palate was as common among the cubs there as it now is in London.

Mr. R. B. Shaw, the explorer of Central Asia, asserts that Humboldt's conception of the mountain systems of that region was incorrect. He regarded the Bolor and Kuen Lun ranges as distinct from the Himalayas, whereas they are in fact a continuation of the same system. The country is a vast basin, with an average elevation of from three thousand to five thousand feet above the sea, and inclosed on all sides but the east by the loftiest mountain ranges in the world, comprising many peaks exceeding twenty thousand feet in height, and few passes lower than seventeen thousand feet.

Right-handedness is common to many of the lower animals as well as to man, and a similar preference for the use of the right foot, the right eye, and indeed the whole right side of the body, to the neglect of the left, is frequently noticeable. Prof. Daniel Wilson, of University College, Toronto, shows, by evidence gathered from various trustworthy sources, that the right hand has always been the one chiefly used, and that the Egyptians were not, as has been asserted, a left-handed race. The cause of this preference is yet to be explained.

Two cases have occurred in Germany, one at Frankfort and one at Jena, where persons using green glazed paper shades were attacked with symptoms of arsenical poisoning, which only ceased when the use of the shade was discontinued. The heat volatilizes the small amount of arsenic present, rendering its effects most dangerous. So we learn from the chemical notes in the *American Chemist.*

A new hygrometer, or instrument for measuring the degrees of moisture or dryness of the atmosphere—so named from the Greek words, *hygros*, moist, and *metron*, a measure—has been invented in Paris by Mr. G. Smith. It consists of slips of paper dipped in a cobalt salt solution, containing common salt and gum Arabic. These strips are blue in dry weather, and rose-red in wet weather.

Sir Henry Rawlinson, President of the Royal Geographical Society, explains Dr. Livingstone's refusal to return home at present, by saying that, as his age would probably render him unfit to go out to Africa again, he naturally prefers to remain and solve the problems he has undertaken, before finally leaving the scene of his great explorations. He is now fifty-five years old.

The injury suffered by vegetation during the last eruption of Mount Vesuvius is attributed by Signor G. A. Pasquale of Naples to the action of common salt, which fell with the ashes in very considerable quantities. The effects produced upon the plants differed from such as are occasioned by heat, or the mechanical action of ashes alone.

One of the uses of storms, according to Dr. Angus Smith, seems to be to supply the world with salt, derived from the waters of the ocean. "A friend of mine," he says, "tells me that the animals on the high Alps are peculiarly attracted by salt, as if the height prevented the usual supply in the rains."

The value of bones as fertilizers, according to Dr. J. Nessler, a German chemist, is enhanced by boiling out the grease, provided the glue is not removed. He also says that they are more readily taken up by the plant the more finely they are ground.

In his experiments on the freezing of water, Boussingault, the French chemist, has proved that water cannot be frozen so long as it is confined within steel cylinders which render expansion impossible.

A case of poisoning by strychnine is said to have been cured in France by the inhalation of chloroform.

In 1871, the rainfall over the British Isles was three per cent. less than the mean annual average.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Cassie writes: "Please advise me, and I will be as brief as possible. A young man has been coming to see me for about three months steady, coming every Wednesday night, and once in a heavy rain. I liked him for that; but he never asks me to go out anywhere with him, not even to church. I hate him for that. He is very lover-like otherwise. I care nothing about him, and consider him quite a bore, as long as he don't take me out. I'm determined to dismiss him, and tell him the reason. I should like to mortify him if I could with a little plain talk. I have known him and his parents for years. He and I had a little silent quarrel, and we avoided each other for two years. Last New-year's day he called on me, although I had not invited him, and acted as if he was very anxious to renew our friendship. I never thought or suspected that he had any feeling but friendship for me, so it is only during the last few months that his attentions have been so lover-like that every one notices it, and asks me if we are engaged. No man shall break my heart. He should not treat me as this one has done, not if I loved him, and surely not when I do not love him. I am twenty-five, and he is four months older. Now shall I dismiss him? or if not, what shall I do to make him understand that I think he is a puppy? I defy any man to make me love him, when I have made up my mind that I won't." Look at the logic of your letter. You are very anxious to make the young man understand two things, namely, first, that he ought take you out; and secondly, that he is a puppy! Now would it not add still more to your pleasure if you could have him take you out and convince—not himself, but other people—that he is a puppy? How delightful it would sound to hear it said, "Miss —— and her puppy were at church to-day!" You defy any one to make you love him, etc. Now the truth is, we apprehend, that you are already in love, and you are anxious to know for a certainty whether the young man loves you as well as you love him. At all events, you might as well express your views to your suitor, and see what comes of it.

Katie (Iowa) writes: "I have been keeping company with a young gentleman for over two years, and I love him dearly, but have never promised to be his wife, although he has asked me repeatedly. The fact is, he *drinks* occasionally—not to excess that I know of, but I fear that it will grow on him. He laughs about it, but will not promise to quit, although he says he cares nothing about it. I have still another admirer, whom I respect very much. He is thought a great deal of, and my friends are partial to him. Now what shall I do? marry the man I love, and who is able to support me, and has but the one fault, and to use a vulgar phrase, 'chance it,' or marry the choice of my friends, and try and love him as becomes a good wife? Now, Mr. Editor, there is more at stake than you may think for. I shall hope to see an answer in your correspondents' column very soon." If the young man cares nothing for liquor and so much for you, he will quit drinking for your sake. Tell him that you love him best, and will marry him if he will leave off this one habit, and that if he does not you will marry the other man; then let him make his choice between what he professes to care nothing for, and what he professes to care so much for.

A. S. says: "Will you please give me the following information which I desire? I am seventeen years old, and am out of work. I would like to enlist in the United States navy, but I have heard of so much ill-treatment on board of ships of war that it makes me hesitate. I wish you would inform me how a boy enlists in the service. Is he put on board of a school-ship without paying? and what is the length of time for which he enlists? Is he compelled to study on all ships of war?" There are so many points involved in the matters which you inquire about, that your best way would be to write to the Naval Department at Washington for a copy of the rules and regulations of the Navy, and then study them thoroughly. By the time you got through, your desire to go to sea would probably be much abated. Then you should visit a United States vessel, and see how the boys live on board, and hear their statements about their treatment; after that you would probably start for home, determined to earn your living on land, and give up all idea of enlisting in the naval service.

Joe Elliot writes: "A question of dispute between myself and some of my neighbors has arisen, as to whether there is a law prohibiting a person, provided he is eligible, from being elected to the Presidency for more than two terms. I contend there is no such law, while some say there is, but it so happens that they cannot find it. I have hunted the Constitution over, and find no such law. Please tell us if there is such a law, and if there is, where to find it, as we all have pitched upon you as the proper one to enlighten us on the subject." There is no law preventing a man from being elected President any number of terms. Washington set the example of declining to be a candidate again after his second election, and all his successors who have been fortunate enough to be elected twice, have thought proper to follow it. But it is simply custom, and not constitutional or statutory law.

Lillian (Fair View) asks: "Will you please inform me who Zenobia was? What can I read in relation to her history? Also, what is meant by the Monroe Doctrine? I have heard it referred to in connection with politics. Also, what is the meaning of the word *infelix*?" Zenobia was a Queen of Palmyra, who acceded to the throne on the death of her husband Odenatus, A. D. 267. She was a woman of great beauty, courage and accomplishments. She was defeated and captured by the Emperor Aurelian, in the year 273, taken to Rome and presented with large possessions near Tivoli, where, in company with her children, she passed the remainder of her life in comfort and splendor. The Monroe Doctrine is the doctrine that no European Government must meddle in the affairs of the independent countries of the American continent. The word *infelix* means unhappy.

Young America writes: "I am twenty-one years old, and have to work for a living, and am engaged to a young lady about seventeen, which is against my mother's will. We have been carrying on a clandestine correspondence, which is also against her will, and that of the rest of the family. Ma don't want me to marry her because she was not brought up to work, and of course don't like to do it; and says, because I have not money enough to go in business for myself, that I had better never marry such a girl. I love her dearly, and am satisfied she loves me. Please inform me, through the columns of your *Ledger* what you would do about such a case." You had better talk the matter over with your mother until you obtain her approbation of your suit.

Artist (Raleigh, N. C.) asks: "Can a person who has a taste for pictures, and who copies well without ever having had any instruction, become a good sketcher and draughtsman? I have from a very early age had a taste for drawing, and can copy very well indeed, but have never been able to do anything original. Do you think, if I were to place myself under the instruction of a good artist, that I could learn to sketch from nature? And could I get remunerative employment?" The only way your question can be determined is by actual experiment. It is impossible for a stranger to foretell what the result of your studies, under a good instructor, would be. As a rule, good sketchers and draughtsmen readily find remunerative employment.

Oscawana says: "I am engaged to be married this fall to a young gentleman who is very highly spoken of. He resides in the country. I received a letter from a friend stating that the young gentleman drinks, and has been doing so for the past year. I have known him for the last three years, and in all that time I have never known him to be under the influence of liquor. Now what I want to know is, would it be right to break off the engagement? My father does not want me to marry him if he drinks. Please answer this, because I depend on you for my fate." Show the young man the letter, and see what he has to say to it. Do not conceal so important a communication from one to whom you are engaged.

Inquirer (Kosciusko, Miss.) writes: "If a gentleman sends a card to a young lady, asking the pleasure of attending her to church, and the answer comes back, 'All right;' and on the gentleman 'going for' her, should he await the lady's pleasure? or should he ask if the lady was ready? In offering the lady his arm, should he offer the right or left? In fact, does it make any difference which arm is offered?" He may inquire if the lady is ready, and will be pretty sure to be told that she is not. Then he may nurse his patience while waiting for her. He should give the lady the inside of the walk, and where it is customary to walk arm in arm—for it is not everywhere—offer whichever arm that brings toward her.

W. E. G. (New York) says: "Will you oblige me by answering a question of some importance to me, through your answers to correspondents. My father died a few years ago, leaving a small property; my mother claims all, no will having been left. Are not my brothers and myself entitled to a portion of the property? If not, why so?" Your brothers and yourself are the only heirs-at-law. Your mother is legally entitled to nothing but her right of dower, which includes the income on one-third the value of the real estate owned by your father at the time of his death.

M. W. writes: "I beg of you to be kind enough to answer this question. I very often go to Jersey, to a young lady's house, and almost every time that I go there I meet a young gentleman, and most generally he sees me home. To tell the truth, I think a great deal of him, and he has been down to our house three or four times. Now what I want to know is this: if you think it is any harm for me to go to this young lady's house, or not?" We do not know why you should refrain from calling on one friend because you meet another friend at her house.

X. Y. Z. (Buffalo) wishes to know "what is required of the gentleman acting as groom's-man at a wedding; and whether he salutes the bride after the ceremony." The duties of a groom's-man depend very much upon the capacity of the groom to arrange all the preliminaries. The groom's-man should see that everything is attended to, and above all, that the wedding ring is not forgotten. He should enter the room with his bride's-maid. Unless the bride is his sister or first cousin he ought not to salute her after the ceremony.

Earnest Inquirer (New York) says: "I have tried hard for the last year to become a good penman, but have failed, as you see. I wish you would tell me, in your next issue, whether it would be better for me to practice off-hand writing, or commence with the first lessons in penmanship." You can only acquire a good handwriting by long and steady practice. You should of course write after copies until you acquire the ability to form your letters readily. After that, practice will give you ease, fluency and style.

Pearl asks: "Is it proper for a young lady to go to dinner at public restaurants alone?" It depends upon circumstances. There are many public restaurants where it would not be proper for a lady to appear alone. On the other hand, in first-class hotels, kept on the European plan, there are restaurants in which it is quite proper for a lady to go unattended, if it suits her convenience.

Elsie asks: "Will you please tell me the meaning of 'Vera amicitia est sempiterna?'" True friendship is everlasting.

O. O. is in trouble. She writes: "Five long, long years ago, I became acquainted with a young gentleman eighteen years of age. I was fourteen. He was a constant visitor at my father's house for over two years. He often told me he loved me, and as often asked me to become his wife. But I would call him a bad boy; and when he would ask me if I loved him, I would sometimes say Yes, and at other times I would say No, which was the truth; for when I was in his company I did not love him, but when he was gone, I did really love him. He was very affectionate. I hardly ever gave him a kind word; but he was always the same. He would never get mad with me. But now the trouble comes. Nearly three years ago, this lover of mine went away. We corresponded regularly for a year and a half. I would sometimes get two letters a week. I was very happy then, I assure you, as he always wrote such loving letters. But for six months his letters were short and far between. It would sometimes be three weeks, and again it would be four, five and six. He has visited me three times in three years. He lived so far away he could not come often. The first two times he came home he treated me as he did in olden times; but the last time he was a little cold. As I had given him no cause to be offended, I did not know what to make of it. But he did not know that I noticed it. Over ten months ago he went home. I have not heard from him since—I mean by letter. I have heard from a friend that he is well. I have written him twice in a friendly way, to send me back my letters and my photographs, of which he has three, and I told him I would return his if he wished it, as I have three of his. But he has not returned mine, or written for his. When he went away he asked me to send him another picture, and he would send me one; but as he did not write according to promise, I did not send it. Now I do not know what to make of his not writing, as he has often told me if we should cease to write, I would find that I would be the first to quit. Now please advise me what to do, as I am almost broken-hearted. Please do not blame the gentleman too much, for he is a good boy; and speak a kind word to me. Don't say, Go to your parents for advice, for indeed I cannot. Please answer this." You have treated the young man with such persistent indifference, that very possibly you may have exhausted his patience, and driven him off to somebody else. But you may as well write him one full and frank letter on the subject, and ascertain the truth. That will be better than to continue in your present state of suspense.

T. M. asks: "If a foreigner comes to this country a widower, and marries a widow who is also a foreigner, and they accumulate property, and never get naturalized, and finally die without leaving any will; and if the man had daughters by his first marriage, and the woman had sons by hers, which would inherit the property—the daughters of the man, or the sons of the woman? Or can any person who is not a citizen of the United States transfer property by a will so it will be valid?" One who is not a citizen cannot legally hold real estate in the United States, unless he has in good faith taken the initial steps to become a citizen, in which case he must in due time go on and perfect his citizenship, or else his title will not be good. A great deal of property is, however, held by persons who have never been naturalized, and their heirs inherit it, and take possession and sell it, and nobody outside the family knows anything about the facts of the case, and sometimes even the heirs themselves do not know the real truth of the matter. In the case you mention, if the property left was held in the name of the father, his daughters would be entitled to it; but if it was held in the name of the mother, her sons would be the heirs, in case the State did not take possession under the law of escheatment, which it is not at all likely that it would do. The best way would be for the sons and daughters to divide the property equally, and so save all hard feelings, and avoid trouble and danger as to the title.

Lena (Missouri) writes: "I live a very secluded life, and consequently have few friends, and not one whose advice I would so trustingly abide by as yours. I have the greatest faith in everything you say, and therefore have come to you in my first real trouble. While boarding with a friend last winter, and going to school, I became acquainted with a young gentleman whom I liked very much at first sight. He came to see me quite often for about a month, when suddenly his visits ended, and I heard nothing from him for several weeks. I thought perhaps he was angry because I refused to give him my photograph the last evening I saw him. I considered myself slighted, consequently did not speak to him the next time we met, or give him any chance to apologize. Shortly after this I went home. I have since heard his aunt was dying, and had sent for him, which was the cause of his absence. He told a friend of mine he was deeply grieved by the way I had treated him. He has now gone away, and will not return until fall. What I wish to know, Mr. Editor, is this: Do you think it would be improper, feeling myself to be in the wrong, to write and tell him so?" We see no objection to your frankly communicating to the young man the misapprehension under which you have labored.

Irondale writes: "We have in our town an individual whose chiefest pleasure is to discuss the late war, and whenever speaking of the official acts of Mr. Lincoln, says Mr. Lincoln could just as well, if he had chosen, have been inaugurated for his first term, in his parlor in Springfield, as at Washington, considering the danger of his trip to the capital. Now will you please tell me if he could have been legally inaugurated in Springfield?" The District of Columbia is established by law as the "Seat of Government" of the United States; but we do not recollect any statute, and there is certainly nothing in the Constitution, which requires that the oath of office should be administered in any particular place. It always has been taken at Washington; but one Vice-President—Mr. King, who was elected when Franklin Pierce was elected President—took the oath of office abroad, we think in one of the West India islands. In that case the subject was discussed, and we believe that inasmuch as the oath was to be administered in a foreign country, a special act of Congress was passed authorizing it. Mr. King was in consumption, and lived but a short time; but he had an ambition to "die Vice-President."

Quandary writes: "I have been in love with a young lady over a year, and I thought that she loved me until I asked her to be mine for ever, which, she said, she could never be; that she don't intend to get married; but if she ever should, it would be to me. She told me to try and forget her, and take some other chance. I told her I would wait as long as she wished, but she always said No. I did not go to see her then for a month, at which time she sent me a letter, saying that she did not believe a word I said; that she never thought I could grow so cold toward her; that she would return my presents if I would accept them, and that she wished to have an answer soon. The first chance I had I went to see her, and asked her what she meant. Then she said she felt sorry for what she had done, and I should excuse her. I did so, but ever since then she turned a cold shoulder toward me. I am a young man, in business for myself, and could give a wife a nice home. Now, Mr. Editor, what do you think I should do? Give her up and try to forget her, or not?" We think the young lady evidently reciprocates your affection, but does not fully understand her own feelings.

A Texan Lady writes: "I am in very poor health, and I feel that I am overtasking what little strength I have. I have nothing to do but the cooking and sewing for myself and husband. I have everything convenient to make my work easy—a good sewing machine and a good cooking stove. My husband gets all the wood and water for me. One would think that I have really nothing to do. My husband is a poor man, but makes a good living, and gets me anything I ask for, and is so kind that I am ashamed to complain to him. What I wish to know is, shall I tell him how I feel, or shall I go on and say nothing about it? I know it is the hot stove that makes me feel so bad. I never cooked until the last five years; was the owner of slaves, therefore had no laborious work to do." Of course you should tell your husband without a moment's hesitation. Have no secrets from your husband.

M. B. (Norwich, Conn.) writes: "I am almost eighteen years of age; have always been to school in the city; have studied all the common branches, besides chemistry, Latin, philosophy, ancient and modern history, and several other studies. Now, what I want to know is, have I a sufficient education to commence the study of medicine, or would you advise me to wait until I am older? And if I have not yet prepared myself to study medicine, will you be so kind as to tell me what branches I ought to study before studying medicine?" Consult the leading physician of your town as to what course you had better pursue, stating to him all your circumstances.

Restless says: "A short time ago I fell in love with my cousin, and when I told her of my affection, she said I could only be a very dear cousin to her. Now for me to stay here and see her the wife of some one else, is more than I can do; and I am now resolved to go away. In which place can a man who is able and willing to work, do the best—in Australia or California?" You are wise not to despair simply because you cannot marry the first woman whom you happen to have fallen in love with. You, very likely, may live to regard what now seems ill luck to you, as good fortune. We think California preferable to Australia as a place to emigrate to, at present.

Raymond (Illinois) writes: "I am a young man, twenty years of age, and am in love with a young lady a year or two my senior. We are engaged, but my friends do not wish me to marry her, simply because of the difference of our ages. We finally agreed to refer the matter to you and abide by your decision. I shall watch the *Ledger* closely until I receive an answer." It is generally thought to be preferable for a man to be older than his wife; but the lady being slightly your senior is a matter of small importance comparatively, if that is the only objection.

F. H. (Boston) writes: "I am fifteen years of age, and for the last four years have been keeping company with a young gentleman who resides in your city. He visits Boston several times a year, and I go to places of amusement with him. Do you think this is proper? He is a very good and accomplished young man. He is twenty-one years of age. I receive letters from him every week." Consult your parents on the subject. You certainly began your courtship pretty young; but we trust you may always continue happy in your choice.

Perplexity wishes to know how to make his whiskers grow. He does not seem to understand that the province of the *Ledger* is to put ideas into people's heads—not hair on their faces. But we can tell him what women do when they want more hair than they have, if that will help him any—*they buy it.*

A Young Man sends us a series of questions about emigrating to Brazil. Our opinion is, that he can do far better in the United States than in Brazil, at present. We have not known one emigrant to Brazil to be contented there.

Lizzy, (Boston.)—The fore-finger of the left hand is the one upon which the engagement ring is worn.

Lagrange asks: "Who was Enoch's mother?" Enoch's mother was Cain's wife.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*